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ABSTRACT

Written by a Tlingit for purposes of affirming Tlingit life style, values, and laws, this narrative account of the Alaskan Tlingit culture and values presents illustrations of the cultural values and value systems manifest in Tlingit language, art forms, music, ceremonies, and rituals. Designed to be instructional, the chapters of this document suggest a Native Studies curriculum. Chapters are titled as follows: "The Tides People (Alaska Native Brotherhood Organizers)"; "Migration"; "The Medicine Man (Ixt)"; "Beliefs: Kushtaka" (with illustration); "Beliefs: Tux Gwuz" (with illustration); "Beliefs: Lun Axeeduk, Auk Woman" (with illustration); "Beliefs: Witchcraft"; "Uncle as Head of Clan House"; "How Information is Passed Down" (with illustration); "Beliefs: Ceremonial Names"; "Leaders of the Clan"; "Negotiations"; "Burial of Mother"; "Ceremonial Dances"; "Personal Names"; "Demon Possessed"; "War Canoes" (with illustration); "Forms of Community Government"; "Law Recognizing Ownership of Land and Sea"; "Laws Covering Liability and the Law of Adultery"; "Copyright Laws"; "Indian Laws of Inheritance"; "Trade Relations"; "First Ritual after a Death"; "The Payoff" (with illustration); "Ritual of Final Rites"; and "Keet: The Tlingit Legend of the Creation of the Killer Whale" (with illustration). (JC)

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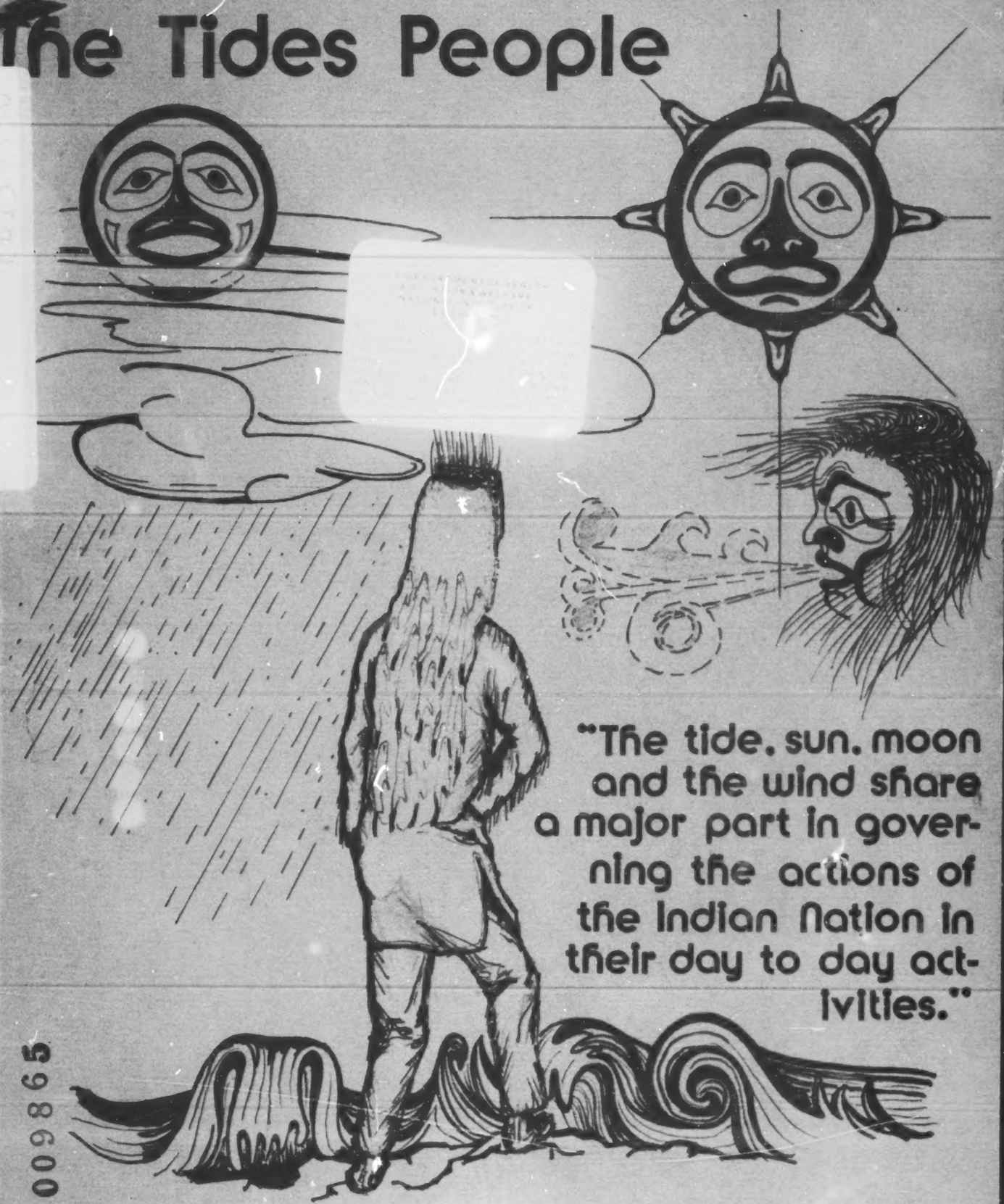
The Tides People



"The tide, sun, moon and the wind share a major part in governing the actions of the Indian Nation in their day to day activities."

Cyrus E. Peck Sr.

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The author, Cyrus E. Peck, Sr., Master of Tlingit Culture.

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PROLOGUE

I am a man of the People of the Tides. The sea is as much a part of me as the land which my God has allowed me to use, and for which I am under a sacred trust to protect and preserve for my nephews--just as my uncle did for me.

Until recently my people, and the other people of Alaska were in danger or extinction by external forces. I can only compare these forces to the "Great Pillow of China" which has absorbed and integrated various ethnic groups until they no longer have an identity. We are now in peaceful conflict with the threats to our nation. We are dredging our heritage and cultural value symbols from the grey and amorphous mass of the melting pot. We are redefining our life-sytle, our values and our law.

Our children will need these things to use as a firm handhald in a radically changing world. This does not mean a revolt against the larger national culture. It only states that we are as entitled to pride and knowledge of our national origins as the Irish, English, German, and other groups who add a nationality to the description "American." There is one difference. We place our ethnic identity <u>after</u> the "American. " We were here when the others came. We are American Indians.

This book is dedicated to the Indian Studies Program,
Juneau School District, Juneau, Alaska.

PREFACE

Any description of the experiences of the Tlingit pre-history will contain factors which do not agree completely with any other description. This is the natural result of different perceptions of the same experience by two observers, and will occur even if the words and gestures, inflections and overtones, are carefully passed down from generation to generation without change.

If you and I spend the day together, and each of us tells of the experience tomorrow, the recounting will differ somewhat. Neither is wrong. The recounting is the way each saw it, honestly and objectively.

For this reason there cannot be a single ethno-history of a people. To many honest descrepancies occur. Languages change and with the changes some meanings are interpreted differently. Some very human kinds of changes occur, too. The result of a battle, for instance, might be a clear-cut victory as seen by one side, but the other may perceive that the engagement was broken off for a very different reason than defeat; by a strategic withdrawal, by a mandate of a spirit, or for many other good causes. The legends of descent by the two groups will vary widely regarding the incident when recounted by future generations.

The roles played by clan houses and by individuals will vary according to the relationship of the recounter to the house or individual.

These legends and depictions of happenings long past are not merely the chronological heritage of the Tlingit. Each contains illustrations of the cultural values to be passed from generation to generation. They are not intended to be entertaining so much as instructional. The same is true of our language, i.e., forms of address, ceremonial wordings and the jocular usage of wit between a man and his daughter-in law. Our art forms, music, ceremonies, and rituals are all devoted to depicting our heritage, explaining and passing on of values and value systems, as well as providing a pleasing, and sometimes awe-some, spectacle in and of themselves.

The following pages are the first of more to come. They contain an accurate retelling of incidents of long ago, and some more recently. Read them for what they are.

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March 1975

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THE TIDES PEOPLE

Tlingit Indians of
Southeast Alaska

By
Cyrus E. Peck, Sr.
Illustrated by Ray Peck

A Narrative Account of
Tlingit Culture and Values
Written by a Tlingit

Indian Studies Program
Title IV IEA

City and Borough of Juneau
School District, Juneau, Alaska

The Tides People. Renee, Doreen and Ray Peck traveled to Spokane's Expo '74 to dance with Gei-San Dancers of Juneau and Haines. Ray does the illustrations for this book.

THE TIDES PEOPLE

My Name is Cyrus E. Peck of Juneau, Alaska. I am employed by the Alaska Department of Administration at the present time. I have served in the ministry of the Presbyterian Church for ten years. I retired from that vocation and became interested in my Tlingit people's welfare. I call them the Indians of Alaska, which can also include all Aleuts, Eskimos, Indians of the Interior, Haidas, and Tsimshian. To get involved, I ran for the Grand Secretaryship, Alaska Native Brotherhood and was elected fourteen consecutive years. I bowed out by declining nomination in 1967, and turned it over to a younger man. My education has consisted of two years of college, one year of seminary work, and ten years of teaching. (When I say teaching I mean teaching and preaching, which go along the same line.) I belong to the Alaska Native Brotherhood. I am a Tlingit myself. I was born and reared in Sitka.

My mother and dad were from Killisnoo and Sitka. Both received their education at the Sitka training school, which is now Sheldon Jackson College. Upon finishing their education there, they got married and moved to a section of land that is reserved by the Presbyterian Church for students who marry in school and settle in Sitka; it was called the Cottage Settlement. (That's how it got

The founding fathers of the Alaska Native Brotherhood. The political arm of the Southeast Alaska Indians. Left to right, Paul Liberty, James Watson, Ralph Young, Eli Katinook, Peter Simpson, Frank Mercer, James Johnson, Chester Worthington, George Field, William Hobson, and Frank Price. Not pictured is Marie Moon Orsen.

its name, and I believe they were the first cottages built in Alaska) From this little colony came the founders of the Alaska Native Brotherhood in 1912. They began the Alaska Native Brotherhood, in which I am very active. I work with the great leaders of this organization, and have talked with the Founding Fathers who have come and gone before me. So, as I traveled up and down the Panhandle on the Princeton-Hall, a missionary boat, I made it a practice to take recordings on Tlingit culture, as well as the Tsimshians and Haidas'. And, I have made it a point to do a little research of my own.

Migration:

The Tlingits have maintained and told stories of how they migrated into this area, Southeast Alaska. The stories have always begun at the source of a big river such as the Copper River, Chilkat River, Taku River, Stikine River, or Unuk, or Chicmin River in the Panhandle. They migrated down from there. Every Tlingit person to whom I spoke to has knowledge of this history of migration.

Let's take the Stikine River for this program. For example, one group migrated from the Canadian source of the river down. The Killer Whale emblem is one of the clans from that tribe, and they then branched out into the Killer Whale Clan which is now called Duxawadey. They came down the Stikine with other clans. What amazes me is the fact that the Tlingit people migrated down several major rivers as far north as Copper River down to the coastal area. In the end, when they met on the coast, they spoke the same language! As far as Ketchikan to the Copper River they spoke Tlingit and understood one another! This migration to the sea could have taken

many years, with long separations of the migrating groups.

I have come to the conclusion that at one time we were all one people, one group, one community. Some tribal leaders say that we were part of the Tsimshians. Of course, our Tlingit words tell us that. The Tsimshians have words the same as we have. For example, the word Tlingit: "Tlin" means tides; "git" is Tsimshian for human being--- the Tides People. During my inquisition with the people who might have had the knowledge of this history of migration, I always tried to find out where we came from before we started migrating from the source of the Stikine River. The Bible is the only authority of creation of man, and there is no other authority as far as I know. We were all in one land. When man was created, we were a segment of that creation. For that reason there has been this question in my mind all these years as to where we migrated from, to the mouth of the Stikine River for instance, and my questions were aimed in that direction.

Well, the older people never knew. Tlingit people have listened to their leaders from years back telling the history of migration, which always seemed to start at the source of a river. I finally came across one possible answer just a few years back. I put the question of migration to one old man very bluntly. I said, "do you know where you migrated from, down the Copper River, and down over the glacier into Yakutat?" The old man's response was, "We migrated from Chitna." "Where were you before", I questioned, "Where were you before you migrated to Chitna?" He sat back and he smiled at me and said, "You are asking me a question that is going to take all night, maybe several days, to explain to you about our migration. I have a theory."

In our history we have a record of two floods. The Bible has only one. It is during this flood that the face of the world was covered with water, and there was not a breath of wind at all. But, yet, the tide was so strong that the people, from wherever they originated, took to their boats and when the water receded, there they were. Now, this is logical. That answered the migration question in my mind which I had carried around for many years. It was possible then that when the flood water receded, there they were at the source of these great rivers up and down the continent of the United States.

Others migrated over the Isthmus of Alaska. Scientists tell us that Siberia and Alaska were once connected. But we, as Indians of Southeast Alaska and Athabascans, have migrated north over the continent, and now we are here.

Beliefs: The Medicine Man (Ixt)

The Tlingit people have beliefs. The medicine man had the authority to foresee. He had the power to tell of future events, and I think that this is one reason the missionaries mistrusted them, because they clashed many times with their different ideas of religion. To this day, the missionary has no dealings with Eecht, or Ixt. We have had the medicine man right up to recent years. Only a few years back one of the great ones passed away. His name was Gambler Bay Jim. He was the last remaining powerful medicine man.

The medicine man could foretell any disasters coming to a community. He had the power, for he could foretell when and where something disastrous was going to happen, and would warn the people.

I have always been of the opinion that the medicine man was a prophet in his own way. Now, the missionaries didn't think so; and for that reason the medicine men were always offbounds to them. But I still think he was a prophet to a certain extent. Of course, he was only human; sometimes selfish feelings probably stole into his way of living.

I offer this story to those who are willing to listen. Ixt had the power to foretell disasters. The people of Tebenkoff Island on the Panhandle were in the thousands, I am told. It was one of the biggest villages in the Panhandle. This was long before white civilization ever came to this area of the country. The medicine man was awakened one night; the spirits had entered his body and he started to foretell. As the spirits entered him, he went into a form of ritual by poinding on the floor with his heel, and his attendants (young men chosen for their good character) put his regalia on him while he was in a trance. (The attendants must be of good character so that they could carry out his wishes and attend him when he was in his trance. And, to his ritual, they carry on his song that he sings.) During the medicine man's performance they clapped two sticks together hitting them like rhythm sticks and kept in tempo with his heels. Soon the medicine man started moving around the fire. His attendants watched him, and he began to talk. He said: "Akaday yah kukdi gahn." "A light is shining on the source of this problem," and his attendants repeated what he said, as the spirits in him began to talk "The first run of sockeye salmon is going to start shortly. Do not let anyone partake of the first run. This is terrible. Do not touch or partake in the first run of sockeye salmon or something terrible will result." After he came out of his trance he asked his attendants what he said. They looked at each other and one said, "You are the one who was talking; why do

you ask us?" (To Ixt, the head attendant repeats everything that was said, word for word, when he is out of the trance. For the spirit in him has been speaking and he doesn't know what he has said.) Then Ixt said, "Now let me tell you this. There is going to be a rule in this community that no one shall touch the first run of sockeye salmon." (Sockeye, or red salmon, is usually the first run of fish in the season.) "Do not let anyone partake of it as food or touch it. It is off bounds." Then he ordered his attendants to inform the community, and they went. They had a meeting that evening and he said to them, "This is what we are going to do. We are going to stay away from the river. Although the first run of salmon is tempting, I will emphasize the order that no one is to touch them."

Well, when the salmon entered the river one of the young men said, "This is nonsense. I am going out to get a salmon and have salmon chowder." So he sneaked out and got a salmon and cooked it for his family.

Around midnight the medicine man went into a trance again. His attendants got out of bed and said, "There he goes again". He went into his traditional fire walk. The spirit started to talk again. "Something is wrong" The first run of salmon that came up was taken! The rule was broken!" After he came out of his trance the medicine man asked the boys what the message was, and they told him. He instructed them to wake everyone; and they did. They had an assembly right away. He said, "The order that I gave and set down for this community, that we do not touch the salmon, has been broken. Which one of you

has done this terrible thing?"

While they were talking a runner came to the medicine man saying, "An epidemic of smallpox has struck our village!" Remember, there were thousands in that community. The epidemic was so severe that everyone was infected. There was no one to take care of those who were sick and could not eat. The sick would jump up, run out, and swing their fists around as they tried to fight off the epidemic. It was so severe that it almost wiped out the entire village. There were only a few of them left after it was over. Was the medicine man a prophet in his own way? I think he was.

This story was told from generation to generation. I have just touched the high spots of it as told to me by an old man by the name of George Sawa of Kake.[1] Many of the old people still remember this epidemic. This story is handed down as history. It was a disastrous epidemic which hit this community of the Kuyu people.

Of course, there are other medicine men who were members of different communities. Kake, Angoon, Hoonah, and Sitka each had one. The last medicine man that I met and talked with died a few years back. His name was "Too Soow" whose name was Gambler Bay Jim. He was one of the last remaining medicine men. He was just an ordinary appearing man like anyone else, but you can see that he had strong features.

[1] Mr. George Sawa lived in Kake, Alaska, where he operated a store-restaurant and pool hall. During the summer months he captained a seine boat for a cannery there until his retirement.

There was a special training a medicine man had to go through when the community medicine man died, the inherited spirits took control of his nephew who had no choice. You see, I just touched the high spots. If I have to go into how one became a medicine man, that will take much longer to tell.

Too-Soow did not inherit spirits from his uncle. When a person decided to become a medicine man, he would take a knife and cut out the tongue of a bird, or any other animal. This particular medicine man that I told you about cut the tongue out of a land otter when it crossed his path and dropped dead in front of him. They claim it is dangerous to cut the tongue of an animal or a bird, even by accident. It would affect a person's life and he would become a medicine man against his will. When someone chooses to become a medicine man, he follows this procedure too; and once he has succeeded, there is no return.

Suppose someone said that there was a hunter 25 miles away who was calling for help! And this happened before the radio. Once a medicine man made a statement to the amazed young men present who listened skeptically to him. He said, "There is a party about 25 miles south from this area; they are in need of food. I have received the message loud and clear. They would like to have tobacco also." This was the time when tobacco was grown and native to this area. Later the seed was lost and to this day was never restored. The youn men there were listening and said, "This is going to be an interesting venture. I have never believed what this medicine man

as said in the past, but now is the time to prove whether or not he is what he says he is." So, a boat was launched and food was loaded aboard and among the provisions taken aboard was tobacco. The medicine man gave the description of the area, which was 25 miles from the village. After the last instructions from the medicine man, the young men paddled away from shore taking the cargo with them.

They arrived at the area the medicine man mentioned, lifted their paddles and laid them aboard their canoe, and drifted about 50 yards from shore. One of the young men said, "This could be a trap set by an enemy." The other asked, "How could the medicine man know if it was enemy or friend?" They drifted awhile, perhaps an hour. Finally one of the young men said, "There is no one here. There is no need of staying any longer. Let's go back." One of the young men said, "I always knew the medicine man was phony." As they were ready to depart, someone spoke from the timberline saying "Are you the people who were sent down with food to be delivered to us?" There was life in the timberline. They walked down to the seashore and welcomed the rescuers and the very badly needed food supply and tobacco. How did the medicine man know such a need existed? How did he get the message? That is a very good question. Metal telepathy? Maybe.

Once the spirit was felt by an individual that he had been chosen to be the medicine man, he went through a severe training program in complete isolation. To do this, he went into the wilderness to fast. There in the wilderness, he had to follow the re-

quirements according to the laws of nature and Tlingit laws. For instance, there would come a time when the candidate felt that the spirits would enter into his body, perhaps as he walked along a trail. An animal would cross his path and drop dead. That was a sign that he was to take the animal to his dwelling. As he continued fasting, he was to cut out animal's tongue. An unseen force would guide his hand with the knife as he cut the tongue out of the animal. It was believed the spirit of this animal was superior to any other spirit in his body. Here it would dwell, within him, as long as he was a medicine man. When he was performing as a medicine man, these spirits would leave his body to look into problems which needed a solution, such as illness, catastrophe, and maybe, the future. The medicine man's role was to foretell what was coming to pass within a clan or a family. It was believed to be dangerous, for anyone to cut the tongue out of an animal by accident, or intentionally, because this action would affect his life. He would become a medicine man. If the animal's tongue was cut by someone with no intentions to be a medicine man, his way of thinking and reasoning would change and he would never live normally again.

When a Tlingit chose to become a medicine man, he had to follow the same procedures mentions: according to the laws, according to the Tlingits way of life, and according to his belief. From the medicine man's way of life, there was no return; he must be a medicine man forever, with his power to foretell and foresee the future. Thus, the way of life and the way of the medicine man was absolutely, positively, and in every way as normal as any man who can see the future, deal with illness, and foretell what is to come to

pass.

Medicine man deals with medicine although he is not a chemist or a pharmacist. He tells the future and that makes him a small prophet in his own way. We have prophets in the Bible--Amos, Isiah--great prophets. God spoke through them. Medicine men could see into the future. They also could help when something happened, as he did with the tragedy of smallpox. He helped his people get rid of it.

In regard to Ixt and his predictions, the residents of the community had the freedom of choice to accept or reject his instruction. In this way the Tlingit nation was a democratic nation.

There were two men who drowned while they were out hunting. These two men were of high standing in the community, as Tlingit leaders. They never returned and they were long overdue, so their family went to this medicine man. They presented him with gifts so he might meet their wish and tell them what happened to these men. They presented him with the gifts; they called this "Heixy," which means, "The most valuable thing I have: I am going to come in and present it." They didn't have to say anything to him further because he already knew what they were going to ask for. We call that "akwa hey." "I ask for your interest in this problem of mine."

Even so, according to ritual, the family told him. "This is what happened to these men." The medicine man went into his dance, around the fire, in the center of the smokehouse where he lived. The spirits came into him, and he went into a trance. The

attendants picked up two sticks and started hitting them together and echoed everything he said. When he came out of his trance, he started talking, "The light-shines on the object." They use that term everytime. He said, "Two men drowned. If you go to a wooded Island, around the point, there is a long sandy beach; you will find the body of one. But the second one, the spirit of the second one is out of our hands and in the power of something else. You are not going to find him. You are going to find one. You take the boat and go over to that island. You go around the point--the body is on the beach there. But the other one will never be found."

The way he put it, he didn't mention Kushtaka, but he said his spirits are in the hands and the power of something else. He didn't come out and say it was the Kushtaka, but that is what he meant. "You will never find him because his spirit and his soul are in the hands of something else. But the other man is dead and his remains are on the beach." The young men looked at one another and said, "I always knew that medicine man was a phony. And I am going to prove it, so I am going to take a boat and go over there." They got a group of young men, got into a boat, and off they went to the island. As they came around one side of the island, there they saw a long sandy beach just as the medicine man had said they would. As they came around a point, they saw a black object on the beach, it was the body of a man.

How did Ixt know that? Something to think about. I always say that there is an answer to everything. But this man was an Ixt, when he went into a trance, the spirits in his body, went out and looked and saw the body came back and informed him where it was.

And he said, too, that the second hunter would never be found, and to this day, his body has never been recovered.

Prophet? Maybe. Well, how did he know? Would he ask cards? Some people believe in fortune telling and cards. I always say that it was just a coincidence--maybe he put two and two together and figured out where they were. Maybe he knew where they were. Maybe he knew where they were and where the wind was blowing, and maybe he knew where they capsized and where they drifted ashore. But how did he know that the other hunter would never be found? He never was found--even to this day. This was in the Roaring 20's when it happened. My father-in-law, Peter Kanosh, was right there; he was the one who told me. He witnessed it. He was one of those who went on the boat to prove what the medicine man had said. And there the body was found. He was one of the crew. I am relating it to you word for word, as he told me.

Prophet? I don't know. Some supernatural power? Maybe yes; maybe no. But the stories are convincing. They will convince you, me, or others that the medicine man has power; and he proves it through things like this incident. And, so, Tlingits could not help but believe in the man's power. So, this is Ixt, he was one of the Raven clan. He belonged to Wrangell. Gambler Bay Jim belonged to the Kake area. He was the last remaining Ixt that I have known personally.

Some educators call Ixt a Shaman in order to identify him to the outside world. Shaman is a mongolian priest and a mongolian

word. It is not native to Alaska. Of course, I have my respect for their interpretation, but it has always been a misleading name for such a person practicing being an Ixt (medicine man). Ixt is a man who tends to the sick troubled. If the people have problems, they bring them to this man in the center of the cummunity. There were some highly educated Ixts who have lived up to their names and performed their duties and were noticed by other groups of people. People came from miles around to bring their sick to this man, because they knew he had the power to help and to take care of the problem of the sick.

So a story was told to me by my father-in-law, Pete Kanosh. I spent a lot of time with him on the trapline and he used to tell me things told to him by his grand-uncle. This is the story he told me.

It happened down on the Southeast Alaska Panhandle in one of the villages. There was a well-known Ixt and he had the power to foresee what was going to happen. One day he went into his trance and started going through his rituals. When he came out of it, his assistants told him what he said. They said, "The land Otter Colony is going to come in a boat to receive you and take you back to their home!" Why this was to happen was unknown. So, as time went on, the time approached, and this medicine man said, "Now I can see. The Land Otter Colony is coming to the beach." When they arrived Ixt went back with them on a boat to their home. When they arrived there he saw why they had brought him. He was to treat an ill prince of the Land Otter Colony. What the cause of it was, they couldn't see, so he went to work on the Prince until the problem was corrected. He got the prince on his feet and cured him of

his illness. (He probably had virus infection, head cold, or something like that.) Anyway, he performed his duty for this very highly esteemed Land Otter leader. When he, the medicine man, was going to return home, they presented him with a "Heixy" which means "the valuable things which are given to him for his services." (Doctors would call this their fee.) The Land Otter leader called all his young men together and said, "You are going to return him to his home." The medicine man didn't realize that home was hundreds of miles away from where he was, until they started returning him home. They got the canoe ready and put him in it; and they threw a mat (something like a small rubber mat) over him. They then began their journey to return him home. He could hear the paddles going. They would say "Gook, Gook." (Gook means "Be Strong, Go ahead; Go forward.") He was under the mat and yet he could sense the young husky men rowing. He noticed they were traveling by nigh only. As the daylight began to dawn (the official day begins when the Raven crows), they would have to paddle hard to the beach before the raven crowed, and hide. When morning arrived, they would row and row, heading for shore, for the first sandy beach. On one occasion they barely reached the beach, got out of sight, when the raven crowed. He saw their tails going in to the den, and he knew that the young men were Kushtakas. Then he would sit around the beach and wait for night time when they would start traveling again--about the time the raven retires for the night, which is the official beginning of night again. Tlingit people believe that when the raven crows, and a nocturnal creature is still out of its home, it instantly dies. The raven was the official alarm clock for all creatures. At night the travelers would all get into the canoe once more and row away into the night, and Ixt could hear them puffing, as they paddled the canoe.

They always threw the mat over on top of the Ixt. He was not to look around. He was to keep his head beneath the mat--that was the rule. Anyway, he would sneak a glimpse from under the mat and all he could see was big young men paddling the canoe. And then again, they were running behind schedule. The person with the paddle at the stern of the boat was the official; he was the captain. He told them how to row. If they were running behind schedule, he was the one who would tell them, "Gook, Gook." It so happened that when the medicine man looked up he recognized the area and saw that they were off Cape Ommany (that's south end of Baranof Island way out in the Gulf). They were way offshore; they had got caught in the tide. They were behind schedule and it was getting late. They came to Cape Ommany where there was a big steep rock all around, right down to the surface of the sea. The rock opened up and there was a beach there. As they hit the beach the young men disappeared just as the raven crowed. They barely made it this time.

When he looked back at the boat, Ixt saw a big skate flapping its wing-like fins around the beach. The canoe was the skate on which they were transported! Kushtakas had the power to give strength to this creature of the deep so that it could hold them; and when they traveled, it was not on top of the water but underneath it. He saw that the canoe, on which they had traveled became a skate again, and was flopping around on the beach. It went back into the water. They waited till night time and started off again to return him to his home.

When he returned home, the community held a ceremoney and they

received the Land Otters as guests. They, in return, made a presentation to him but said that he could not look at it until they were gone. So when they left, he opened the present up; it was an Indian halibut hook. That is where Tlingits say the first Indian halibut hook originated. It was given to us by the Kushta (Land Otter Colony) as payment to the medicine man for his services. When a halibut takes the bait on this special hook, there is a little nail or spike which sticks out and holds only about half an inch or so of the upper part of its mouth; that puts the halibut under a spell, so it will not move. When it is lifted up out of the water, it just comes right up to the boat, no matter how big the halibut is. It is helpless. That is how Tlingits caught their halibut years ago--by using this type of halibut hook. It was a gift from the Land Otter people. So when the halibut hook is carved, the pattern or idea comes from the Land Otter Colony. That's it. True or false? I don't know.

I was asked, "Sometimes when you talk, you say Kushtaka and sumetimes you say Kushta. Is there a difference?" My answer is yes there is a difference: Kushta is the Land Otter Colony or groups. Kushtaka is different. He is a man who has been saved by the Land Otter Colony. He becomes a man that moves with the wind. He has the power to change your mind, and so on. But Kushta is the colony.

Beliefs: Kushtaka

There is a belief of the Tlingit people that if someone falls overboard or his canoe capsizes and is saved by the Land Otter Colony, he becomes one of them. His appearance is changed, only his brother or

Kushdaka is a weird looking creature who might be glimpsed darting from tree to tree keeping out of range of the observer. It moves like the wind and disappears at will only to reappear again elsewhere, all the time keeping its hand before its face and peering out at times through its fingers.

sister can recognize him. But, they are powerless to help him because he is a captive of the land otter. The captives are called Kushtaka. There are those in our Southeast villages, who believe in Kushtaka.

What Is Kushtaka--Do You Really Want To Know?

Kushtaka is a weird looking creature who might be glimpsed darting from tree to tree keeping out of range of the observer. It moves like the wind and disappears at will only to reappear again elsewhere, all the time keeping its hand before its face and peering out at times through its fingers. The shock of seeing it is tremendous. Whenever Kushtaka catches and breathes on its captive he looses all sense of reality until the Kushtaka leaves.

Hearing Kushtaka in the forest is a sound similar to that of someone hitting a tree trunk with a club.

"Ahs da do hished," the Tlingits would say, "Somebeing is hitting the trunk of a tree."

Then, later, during the night, the Tlingit hunter sitting by a camp fire would hear a very deep toned whistle in the forest. This of course would make the hair of the hunter stand up.

Another way it makes its presence known is by throwing acorns at you or your house. One acorn after another. Then, Kushtaka appears sitting by the door with its hands shielding its face from the light. It has long hair covering its body from head to toe. It is wearing ragged clothes. If you try and talk to it--it disappears just as fast as it appeared.

There is a small stream at the foot of Pyramid Mountain about ten miles south of Sitka. The stream bears the name Yikx Gudice Eexk, meaning "down where one walked and howled." The story goes that a group of hunters from Sitka camped at this stream when they were hit by flying acorns. It was early in the morning when Kushtaka appeared. The hunters were so frightened they jumped into their canoe and paddled away furiously from it.

The creature came down to the beach from the woods howling after the hunters. This is how the

stream got its name Yikx Baduce Eexk.

This was told to me by Mr. Peter Kanosh and James Boyd.

Belief: Tux Gwuz

There is another belief in Tux Gwuz'--a man that has gone wild and wanders in the wilderness with an adz in his hand. Anyone who sees the result of his work in the woods inherits wealth. I would like to go into what I saw and what I know in regard to this.

There was a man whom I struck up an acquaintance with, who came across Tux Gwuz' works in the wilderness. He put the wood chips in a sack, fasted eight days, and became a wealthy man. He had a Midas Touch--everything he touched turned to money. When he went fishing, he was top boat. But when I met him, he was a poor man. He took me to the place and showed me where he gathered the works of Tux Gwuz. I often think about it. (Every time I remember, and see the works of Tux Gwuz' that he gathered, I wonder about it.)

I have seen the tree in Bear Harbor in African Canal. We were on a trapline in a boat with a man by the name of Paul White, who passed away a few years ago in Hoonah, John Joseph who passed away in Wrangell, this friend of mine, and myself. This man said, "We are going by the place where I first discovered the work of Tux Gwuz. That's why I trap around this place. This is my land, my trapline. That is why we are here. I am going to show you where I got the start of my wealth. My luck changed ever since then." He took us to the place and siad, "I am not going to point it out to you, because it is right there standing out in the open. But let me tell you one thing, you are not going to see it because you have to go into a fast for many days and have to live a

Tux Gwuz'-- a man that has gone wild and wanders in the wilderness with an adz in his hand. Anyone who sees the result of his work in the woods inherits wealth.

good life, which you are not doing. For that reason you will not see this tree. You can look around see if you can find it." We looked and looked. I was the first one to give up. I said,"There is nothing around here on the island." I asked John if he had given up yet, and he said,"No. I will find it." About 10 or 15 minutes later he said, " Okay, -you win." This friend of ours took an oar and said, "I am going to point at it and you can look down the back of the oar.". He did that and said, "Now look at it." It was a spruce about three feet in diameter, about 25-30 feet high on an island. From the top of the tree ran spiral circles all the way down. I would say about a 2 1/2 inch wide groove and about one inch deep. There was an even size and depth groove all the way from the top right down to the root. When he found it, there were eight circles going down like a spiral curve, going down to the ground. The chips from the tree were still together; they were at the foot of the tree like a coil or rope and made eight spiral circles. So he had to fast eight days after he got it.

I often wonder about this. I feel there must be an answer. Civilized-but self proclaimed-people say there is always an answer for everything. And the only answer they can come up with for this phenomenon is, "It's possible that lightening struck the tree."

The man who could confirm this happening died a few years ago. Every time we spent time together, we discussed it; and we often wondered how the tree was carved. We never did get an answer to how it happened. The man said, "Good fortune looked upon me, and money came in. The result of it was I had a store, poolhall, I was in business. But I did not live a good life and all my wealth turned to moths and flew away. And now I am poor today."

Beliefs: Lun Axeeduk, Auk Woman

This is a story about a Tlingit woman of the Auke tribe. The events happened in Auke Bay. This is about a creature that a young man picked out from Auke Lake. They call it Oh-tu-yuddy. But all these years I have lived no one has ever seen one. They say it is an insect from the lake. Someday I am going to take my Auke tribe friends out and have them show me what kind of insect it was. The creature grew and developed sharp nails, and one night when the community was asleep, it went from one house to another picking out the eyes of the people while they were asleep; except for one woman who was with child. She noticed that this creature came in and started to reach for her eyes. She slapped its hands away and survived. When she arose the next morning she found her community all dead. She was the only survivor. After she had the child, she went into the woods carrying the baby. And to this day old time Tlingits still say that they can hear the woman and baby, and she would be singing to it, "My poor child, my poor child..." The baby would be crying. So if you hear this in the woods, it is this woman, who is believed to be still wandering around in the wilderness.

We used to talk about this at home. My mother believed it. I would say to my mother, "How is it we don't hear it anymore? I haven't heard of anyone hearing the woman walking around with the baby crying on her back." I always tell her it is nonsense. She would say, "You know son, I often think the way you do, and I think that it is because a civilization of too many people came into our country and scared them off and we have abandoned the belief."

Lun Axeeduk, Auk Woman. The only survivor of an attack of a insect monstor. Old time Tlingits still say that they can hear the woman and baby, and she would be singing to it, "My poor child, my poor child..." The baby would be crying. So if you hear this in the woods, it is this woman, who is believed to be sill wandering around in the wilderness.

The legend is something that the older people and many others believe still exists, and maybe it does--I don't know. But so far, I have never had such luck as to hear what they say I should hear when it is around. The baby would be crying and the mother would be saying love words to it. That way they would try to locate it. If they could find it, they would try to grab the baby off the back of the woman. They say that the woman has long and sharp claws. I was told that years ago, before white civilization came, there were many who had encountered that experience. She turns around and scratches them deeply on the arm and shoulder. When the wound is healing, they take the scab from the wound and put it in a bag; it becomes a charm. They get something like a Midas touch and become wealthy. That is their belief.

Where did this woman come from? She came from the Auke people. She took her crying baby on her shoulder and went up into the woods. She was all alone--the entire village was wiped out. The orators of my day use the name "Luna Xeeduk" when speaking to a person who they think is misleading the people. They say, "You are as an orator taking the eyes of the people and misleading them." That expression comes from this legend.

They see the signs of Luna Xeeduk, for instance. The mussels all over the Panhandle are poisonous. Around Auke Bay they grow plentiful on the rocks. You can take them and make soup and they are just as pure as stream water. The Auke people explained to me it is because "Luna Xeeduk" ate them, and that is why they became pure here. The results of the work of Luna Xeeduk and Tux Gwuz' is that when they eat mussels, they throw the shell back over their shoulder and they fall

In Sitka the Kiksadi clan of people have a story of a woman becoming an owl. There is a little landslide near Sitka they call the Owl Landslide. To this day the Sitka people still call it that.

into place all in a line. If anyone sees that they pick it up and take it as a charm and fast for so many days; they become wealthy. That is Tlingit Belief.

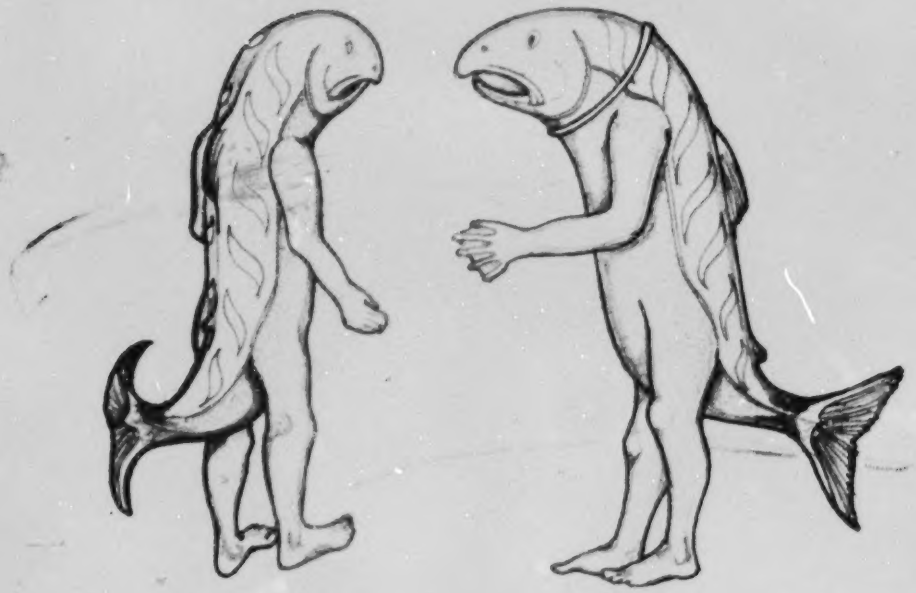
A Legend: Salmon Colony

In Sitka the Kiksadi clan of people have a story of a woman becoming an owl. Her family mistreated her when they were harvesting herring. They took her herring pot away from her. They called it kot (some kind of net that catches herring). She kept appealing to them, but they wouldn't pay any attention to her. She went into the woods. Soon a sound of hooting came from the forest; she had become an owl. There is a little landslide they call the Owl Landslide. To this day the Sitka people still call it that.

There is another story, another myth. It is a very interesting story. In Sitka, the people who owned the land were the Kiksadi clan. Once, they sailed out into the ocean to hunt seal. Other canoes were out seal hunting, too, and they came up on the rock where the seals were sitting. A little young seal was crying and the older adult spoke and said: "Keep that child quiet. If the great hunter from Sitka comes around here, he will hear it crying. 'Ka-Xuch-Gook' is the name of the man." So the word came to Ka-Xuch-Gook' that someone spoke in the seal conlony advising the adult seal to keep the infant quiet so it wouldn't give their position away.

So his relatives say that that was a sign that he, Ka-Xuch-Gook, was going to have a bad experience. That is another story--it could go on and be very interesting. The story is as follows:

Auk Ta Tseen and the Salmon Colony. Auk Ta Tseen went out and found his little snare had a live seagull in it. The captured seagull struggled out into deep water. As he reached for the seagull, he carelessly stepped into the water, and instead of falling into it, he fell into a boat, and was saved.

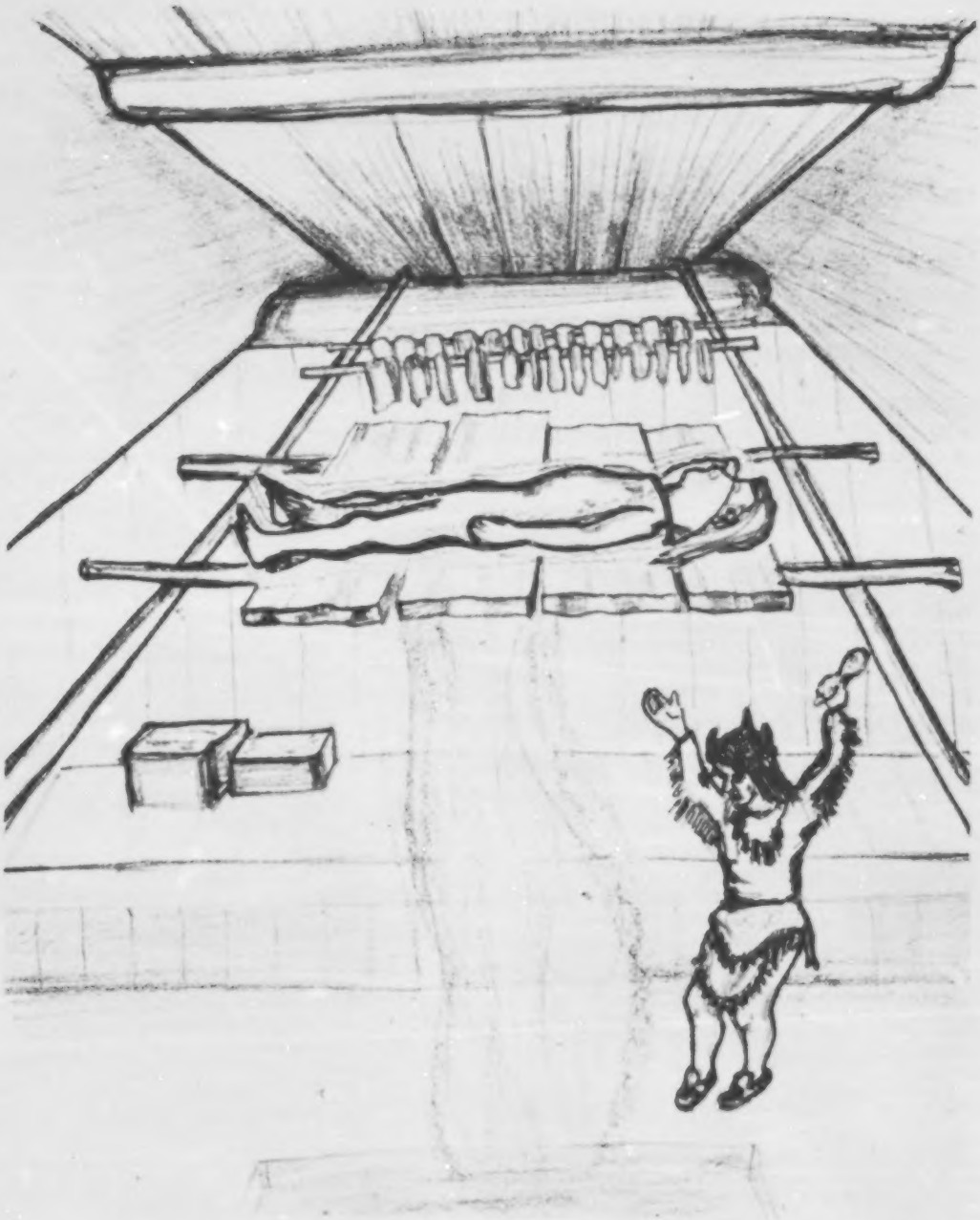


The legend of Auk Ta Tseen and the Salmon Colony. Auk Ta Tseen with a copper band around his neck, which his mother put there for identification, in his adventure with the Salmon Colony as they went with him out to sea.

Ka-Xuch-Gook and his nephews were hunting seal in the Sitka Sound and an offshore wind came and got so strong they drifted out to sea. Ka-Xuch-Gook ordered his nephews to put their oars in the boat. They went to bed and just drifted for days. Finally they felt the boat hitting a sand beach and Ka-Xuch-Gook got up and looked around and there was a sand island. They thought they saw bamboo trees on the island. They didn't say bamboo, they called it Koox. The Koox is wild rhubarb that grows around Southeast Alaska; it burns your tongue if you eat it. In the fall of the year the seeds turn hard; the Tlingits call it Koox, meaning "it turned to wood." "Ka-Xuch-Gook" said there was a lot of big wild rhubarb on the island with fresh water in stumps of broken Koox. This supplied their drinking water.

There were valuable fur bearing animals on island and sea, like fur seal, land and sea otter and fowls of the air, and lea lion. Ka Xuch-Gook, with his nephews, obtained great wealth from harvesting the fur, and sea lions' whiskers that we highly value for regalia. The nephews of Ka-Xuch-Gook, accumulated so much wealth that he assigned one of his men to enlarge their boat. Every evening he, Ka-Xuch-Gook, would sit and watch the sun where it arose and set. From this he, Ka-Xuch-Gook, plotted the course by which they would steer the boat when they started for their homeland.

He told his nephews, "Six days more and we will start for home. We will load aboard our igdus (freight), water, and food supply, and move" At the designated time they got their food supply, loaded



The medicine man worked all through the night, then all of a sudden came a buzzing sound just like a swarm of bees. Soon they heard movements on the board. When they investigated, there was Auk Ta Tseen being restored to his natural form ...

their cargo, and took off in the direction Ka-Xuch-Gook had figured out from the position of the rising sun.

Every day they kept going, on course. Every evening at night they dropped a sea anchor to hold them in the area so they would not drift off course. In the morning they would continue on in the same direction again. Finally they saw a small seagull up ahead and as they came closer, it became larger and finally it turned out to be Mt. Edgecumbe. And they got back.

A story which goes along with this legend is very interesting. Ka-Xuch-Gook had two wives. One was about fifty years of age, the other was past twenty. The senior of the two was faithful and waited for the return of her husband. At the close of each day she would go to the seashore and weep silently; no one knew what happened to Ka-Xuch-Gook and his nephews. When the people of Sitka and surrounding camps gave them up for dead, Ka-Xuch-Gooks' elderly wife would say, "He will return, I know he is not dead. The day will come when they will come back paddling their canoe." As for the younger wife of Ka-Xuch-Gook, who waited for a short period of time but finally took off on Ka-Xuch-Gook and married another man. The elderly wife was rewarded for her faithfulness when Ka-Xuch-Gook finally returned with great wealth.

Another legend often told about is Auk Ta Tseen. It is about a young man who was captured and taken hostage by the Salmon Colony and became a salmon. In Nakasina Pass in Sitka, where I used to go with my mother and father, we used to go out in the summer and fall of the year when salmon were in the streams. In a river nearby we used to get out salmon and smoke it for our winter supply. We used to sit for hours and

hear about this story and what happened there in that area.

The story goes that a young man was outside playing. His mother was getting their camp settled for the summer. He came in as all children do and said: "I am hungry." His mother said, "There is last year's salmon." She went over and picked a piece out for him. There was a little mold on it. He looked at it and said, "This is moldy thing--it is no good to eat." His mother said, "Do not talk like that about food. It might turn against you," she scolded. It was believed that if you talked about any animal in a harsh manner, it would be insulted and seek revenge. But he took it and left and said, "I am going down to the trap." At that time they used seagulls for food and cooked them as you would a duck or other fowls of the air that are used for food. So, he went out and found his little snare had a little seagull in it. The captured seagull struggled out into deep water. As he reached for the seagull, he carelessly stepped into the water, and instead of falling into it, he fell into a boat, and was saved. He looked around. It was occupied by young men of the Salmon Colony and they started rowing.

They left the Duxeit (that is the name of the river) with him as a hostage to a land unknown. Previous to his present experience his mother put a copper band around his neck for identification which would have a very important part in his experience with the salmon colony as they went with him out to sea. At the end of the day when Auk Ta Tseen did not return home, his parents became alarmed, so a search was organized and was made throughout the land. According

to law when a person is lost a certain length of time (so many days or weeks or months) and when all hopes of ever finding him are gone, a ritual is performed by the parents of the person with his clan. This is called "Yun Yoo Ut Kowa Tee", which means that all rituals have been taken care of in memory of the person who is missing and presumed dead. So the time came that this ritual was to be performed." "Auk Ta Tseen is gone and he is dead,"they mourned.

When the salmon colony came to their home, it was similar to any other landsite that Auk Ta Tseen had seen during his life time. It was a land of freedom. They were people, not salmon. But yet, somehow, he had an idea that he was not within a normal village. To him they were people and they became friends. He carried on his day to-day routine. He played with his friends. He made friends quickly. He was a young man who was aggressive. He was a young man who was easy to talk to and liked to make friends. He liked to go on hikes and play games just like any child of today. Every day, early, he would go and explore the community. He wanted to get acquainted and meet the young people. In one part of the community he noticed there was a lot of commotion, noise, laughter, and playing. As he passed a certain fenced-off area, which was isolated, he wanted to know what was going on, but his friends would protest his approaching that area. This made it more interesting to him, and he became more curious as time went on. So one day as he hiked through the village he remembered this particular place and went and looked. As he looked in between the cracks of the fenced-off area he noticed that there was a lot of

playing going on and all of a sudden a big splash of water hit his face. He learned that this was the herring colony, and he also learned that what hit his face was herring spawn. He didn't know that his little friends were watching him. When this happened they all screamed and shouted with glee and got a good laugh out of it. This was an embarassing moment for Auk Ta Tseen who had always had things his own way with his friends back home. So Auk Ta Tseen heen to leave remembering the many embarassing moments of his experience with the salmon colony.

Up till now Auk Ta Tseen did not have a name within the community, so the council of the salmon colony came together and the question was put: "What shall we call this young man? What name should we give him for his identification with in our community?" After much discussion on the subject, an idea was given that created his name in the community. We remember his remark made about the dried salmon his mother gave him that was moldy. He had said, "How can one eat such a moldy salmon," and he then threw it in a corner. "This is what started it in the first place," the speaker said within the salmon colony, "so let's give him that name which he used: "Shu Yagu Tlax". So that was his name in the community. Anyone who greeted him on a trail or within his community of the salmon colony would hail him and call him by his name. "How are you doing today, Shu Yagu Tlax?"

Because of Auk Ta Tseen's class standing within his home community he had pride. He had strength. He was a man. He was active. If there was any news in the community, he would be the first

to know. When they played games he would be a good player. He had pride in his ability to get along with his friends, and this gave him knowledge and understanding. He was always willing to give the needy a helping hand. He was kind and gentle. Because of this his little friends loved him.

One day, as he was strolling through the Salmon community, he heard a lot of commotion, laughter, singing, dancing, and again he became curious and wanted to find out for himself just what was going on in a fenced off area. Again, curiously, he walked up to the fenced off area and looked. He saw salmon eggs this time and they looked good enough to eat. This brought back memories of his home town. As he picked up one egg, he examined it and he remembered that his mother used to prepare it for meals. As he was thinking about this, he put it in his mouth and ate the egg, not knowing that his young friends were observing him. All of a sudden they set off the alarm saying: "Shun Yagu Tlax has eaten the dung of the people." He had embarassing moments in the past, but this one really struck him in the face. To be accused of eating the dung of the people! That was just too much for him to bear. He walked back to his dwelling very slowly, a defeated young man. When he came to his dwelling, he went right to his bed, prepared it, took off his mocassins and his clothing, and crawled into bed and pulled the blankets over his head. And he remained that way for days until the leader of the community inquired: "Where is Shun Yagu Tlax? I haven't seen him around the last few days." The leader of the colony knew the feelings of Shun Yagu Tlax were hurt, and that something should be done about it

immediately. So the leader of the salmon colony called a conference. Again they went into session to decide just what was to be done about Shun Yagu Tlax's emotions that triggered his peculiar actions. The action of the council arrived in the final decision. This is what the leader of the conference said: "Take him in a boat to the emotions- and mind-untangling river. There put his arms around the object at the mouth thereof!" What the object at the mouth of the river was, only the salmon colony knew. In Tlingit terms the quotation goes as follows: "awut ka doolthy seinuxgi yuti; so they took a boat that took him to the river to untangle his emotions and mind, and there they put his arms around the object at the mouth of the river. There Auk Ta Tseen back to his normal self once more.

Much has become knowledge concerning the habits of the salmon because of the Legend of Auk Ta Tseen. It is said that the salmon spawns according to species. The first run of salmon was silver, which we call "xoox." The next run was dog salmon. The third was pink salmon, which we call humpies. And the last was red salmon or sockeyes. As the salmon were preparing to migrate back to their parental streams, it is said, they would get into conflicts as to whose turn it was to spawn. It is said in legend that the salmon colony traveled by boats. The silver salmon were ready to leave, as one legend put it, when a conflict arose among the salmon colony which caused them to destroy the boats of the silver salmon, the dog salmon, and the pink salmon. But, in the course of the conflict, the salmon were able to save some of their equipment and boats. Because of this conflict, the order of

spawn was switched around. Today we have the reds migrate first into the parental rivers. Next come the pinks, the dogs, and the silvers, in that order. This order of migration is true to this day.

It was also learned, from the experience of Auk Ta Tseen, that it took two years for the pink salmon to complete their cycle; they returned to their parental stream after a two-year cycle; that is, after they had spawned and hatched in their parental streams. It took four years for the sockeyes to complete their cycle before they migrated back to the rivers they were spawned from. The dog salmon took three years and so did the silvers. This order of cycle was established from Auk Ta Tseen's experience. So the salmon story is told and is believed to this day.

The hosts of Auk Ta Tseen began their preparation for travel. They packed and began to store things ready to load on their boat. And the migration of salmon began. The salmon and Auk Ta Tseen traveled as if they were in a boat going down the creek. In his way of thinking, this is what he saw. They rowed just like anyone else would row or paddle a canoe. So they started migrating back to the parental stream near the place where Auk Ta Tseen came from. And as they went along, they came to the mouth of the Nakwasina Pass Inlet, namely the River Duhxeit. There is an island they passed in Sitka Sound, to this day, named "Thahts Woos Teen" which means

"an island that the salmon did not see--they passed it by." As the salmon migrated up the bay with Auk Ta Tseen, they saw a boat ahead of them with a family moving to the river area. The leader or the captain of the boat said to "Get up. Show yourself to your parents." He did. He stood up in the boat, and this is what happened: The parents of Auk Ta Tseen saw a salmon jump and said, "Ahoy! Ahoy! Your river is only flowing with marine growth. (grass) Keep moving on because your river is only flowing with green marine growth." (salmon migrating up stream keep the stream clean of marine life) This puzzled Auk Ta Tseen. Why did they say that? He kept it in his mind and remembered what his parents said. In Auk Ta Tseen's mind he stood up, but to his parents they saw salmon break water. Not Auk Ta Tseen. When the salmon reached the mouth of the river, they spent days looking over the place. They stayed at the mouth of the river until the leader of the salmon colony said to them that the time was right for them to move up the river. So they moved. They paddled the boat and moved up the river. You see, Auk Ta Tseen appeared to everyone as a salmon.

He was trained by the salmon people in things to do in case he was ever caught with a gaff hook. He was trained and taught to move his spirit to the tail tip of his body if he was caught by a gaff hook. The gaff hook is an implement used by the Tlingits to catch salmon in the rivers. It was a long pole with a hook on the end of it. When they

migrated up the river, who did he see but his mother who was already preparing salmon for a meal. He was so homesick that in the river he kept moving closer to his mother. He would drift himself close to the bank of the river. His mother noticed that a fat, bright salmon was moving in close to the shore all the time. So she called her husband saying, "look at this beautiful salmon. It has been moving close to me and the bank of this river all morning." So the father went and got a gaff hook and when again Auk Ta Tseen drifted close to the bank of the river, the father gaffed him. Auk Ta Tseen followed the instructions of the salmon colony by moving his spirit to the tail tip of his body. On landing the salmon, the father gave it to his wife to dress and prepare for winter, as they did to all other salmon they caught during the summer.

After sharpening the knife she used to prepare salmon with, Auk Ta Tseen's mother took the salmon and began to cut the head off, but what did she see? A copper band around the neck of the salmon! She called her husband immediately and said, "Look at this. Look at this band that is on the neck of the salmon. It appears to be the band that our boy was using for identification." The father came down and looked at it and confirmed her observation saying, "This is the band that our son had around his neck when he disappeared." Immediately the medicine man of their community was informed and was called upon for service. He went to work on the salmon.

The medicine man said, "Clean out the house thoroughtly and re-gravel around the fire so that it will be spotlessly clean. We will begin work on this salmon and see what becomes of it; and what we can make out of what we see. His instructions were carried out. The facilities were all spotlessly cleaned out and the salmon was moved into the house. The medicine man began to work on it. He went through his rituals. They put the salmon on a board and raised it up to the uppermost part of the smokehouse. There Auk Ta Tseen lay. The medicine man worked all through the night, then all of a sudden came a buzzing sound just like a swarm of bees buzzing. Soon they heard movements on the board. When they investigated, there was Auk Ta Tseen being restored to his natural form and to his natural mind as a human being. From this experience Auk Ta Tseen became a very powerful medicine man.

In the tribal territories of the River Duhxeit there is a smaller river that flows into it; it is called in Tlingit Shahyuxdayikheen. At the very source of this stream there is a water fall measuring in height two or three hundred feet. In this stream on this small river the medicine man Auk Ta Tseen came out with this statement, saying, "I shall build a raft and drift down this river and go over the falls, and on down 200 feet! Down into the main stream of the River Duhxeit, and I will receive more power. Any vol-

unteers who wish to make the journey with me are welcome. They, too, shall receive power." Now, this is a very bold statement. Nobody believed he could fall 200 feet in a raft and come out alive. But there were three young men who said: "We will go!" So they journeyed up the side of the mountain, up to the source of Shahyuxdayik Heen. There they built a raft. When they had finished building this raft, the medicine man gave it the name "Tomhamuz," which means, "the sea lion raft." Auk Ta Tseen and the three younger men pushed it out into mid-stream and started their journey down the river in the direction of the falls. As they neared the falls, one of the young men lost faith in himself and became frightened. He jumped off the raft as it drifted toward the falls. Then the raft plunged down 200 feet carrying Auk Ta Tseen and the two young men with it! The young man who jumped off ran down the mountain bringing the news to the villagers, saying, "All on the raft have perished! All on the raft are dead!" There wasn't anything the community could do. Some said, "Why did we listen to such a foolish idea, made by a man who we do not know, and who said he had power to evade death!" Days followed and all was quiet and solemn in that community. What could the villagers do? Nothing could bring back the lives of their loved ones.

There is a rock at the mouth of this river about 500 yards to a mile from the mouth of the river that stands

as a monument to the Kiks Udi clan. Suddenly, a runner came out of the forest to the village saying, "A raft has come to the surface in front of that rock!" The people of that village rushed to the shore, and what did they see? All the fowls of the air were circling around that raft in spirals, like a twister, indicating that something was wrong on the raft. So the villagers went out to investigate. And there they found Auk Ta Tseen and those who were with him. They all were in a trance on their backs on the raft. Alive! Double power? Double medicine man's power had entered the body of Auk Ta Tseen and those young men who were with him. This remains as history of the Kiks Udi clan of Sitka.

Beliefs: Witchcraft

I had a cousin who was a member of the House of Representatives and a member of the Alaska Native Brotherhood. He often talked about witchcraft. I fished with him around the Panhandle for many summers, and when we sat at wheel watch, we often talked about this. We concluded that the only way that a person could get rid of another person through witchcraft, is by planting a germ in his food, and then he cannot help but get sick. It is said that if anybody is dying of some illness, it is the result of somebody's handiwork in witchcraft--that he is bewitched. That is another belief many of our older people are still clinging to. The stories on television we see, such as "Bewitched," just

don't do it any good at all. If anybody called somebody a witch, it was a killing word; it was a disgrace. People were careful how they used that word "witchcraft."

There are those who really still believe that there are witches. As I stated before, if anyone is called a witch, it is an insult. It is a fighting word and many times it has caused killing. It is an insult to be called a witch among our people. It is a disgrace.

We simplify its importance today by having it on TV: like "Bewitched." That idea isn't doing justice to us. We have been trying lately to lessen its importance in our Tlingits' way of life. I always say that there is no such thing as witchcraft. My mother was a stern believer in witchcraft, and she believed in civilization, but yet she died believing. I used to tell my mother that there is no such thing as witchcraft. There is strong belief, yet, among the Tlingits in smaller communities that there is witchcraft.

Uncle As Head of Clan House

In their home rulings the uncle was the leader. I always refrain from using the term "chief" because there is no one who is chief in the community. The community is organized with board members. The uncle is the head of the house of his clan. The next house might be a Raven house. They, too, have a leader, and the leader is the uncle. He inherits the position from his uncle. Whenever Tlingits are going to

decide anything for the benefit of the community, these people got together in a board meeting. We don't have one chief to rule. For this reason I try to discourage the older people from calling themselves "chief" because they are not--they are leaders of their clans.

Eecht was top man, but he did not rule the community. He was only the doctor. The people had the freedom of choice and freedom of belief in the medicine man. He was there to foretell the future.

How Information Is Passed Down

All these beliefs I speak of, the information I am presenting here, I got from the older people where I come from Angoon, and also from Kake, Klawock, Hoonah. One person who told me a lot of beliefs, laws, and regulations was a father-in-law by the name of Peter Kanosh[2], who died a few years ago. I am telling you what he told me, and it has been passed on to you.

I have seen this information handed down. A nephew would sit at the feet of his uncle who would tell what was to happen in his household, and he would repeat and use words which were chosen from generations back. When he was through, he would get his student and tell him, "Now you tell me what I just told you." And the nephew would relate it back to him word for word. If there was something wrong, the uncle would stop the nephew and correct him and say, "it

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[2]Mr. Pete Kanosh lived in Angoon, Alaska, and was considered by the Tlingits as a great orator and authority on their culture. He was of the Killerwhale clan and caretaker of the "Keet Hit" a tribal house there. He worked in the Alaska Juneau Gold Mine and fished out of Juneau until his retirement.

The uncle is the head of the house of his clan. The next house might be a Raven House. They too, have a leader, and the leader is the uncle. He inherits the position from his uncle. The uncle trains the nephew to become strong physically, mentally, and to respect authority by withstanding cold water even during the winter months. The brarch whipping stimulates blood circulation.

was this way," until he got it right. Then he would go on and relate other things to his nephew. That is the way it was handed down. There was very little change or variation, if any. It was not like gossip. When they related legends to their tribal house and occupants, nieces, nephews, or whatever relative, they had to use the official words till the relative got it right--there was no ad libbing. This has always been interesting to me.

Beliefs: Ceremonial Names

I am now going to go into ceremonial procedures. My very close cousin passed away--Rev. George Betts. He was an ordained minister. His name was Us Xak meaning "There are two trees or between the two trees." That name was derived from the Wolf Panel (plague) "Gooch Goz." At one time, they had to hide the panel from an enemy, and they put it between two trees; and that is how it got its name. When Mr. Betts died, they had a formal ceremony. I didn't expect what was going to happen, and when it did happen, it was a surprise. The guests were seated. A bowl with $3,500 in currency was in the middle of the room. The family had pooled their money to pay off the honorary pallbearers and regular pallbearers for their services. They brought me forward and they took the money (that is one procedure) and said, "We are going to give you a new name. In this area your name shall be Us Xak." They took the money and touched my face with it. That's the ritual ceremony that is used in giving names. There are a lot of Caucasian friends of ours who say they would like to be given a Tlingit name. They don't realize it costs money to be given a name. It cost my clan over $3,000 to give me the name

of my cousin who died. So the name is not dead--I am carrying it now. The people in that area when they are having a formal ceremony are going to call me by the name of "Us Xak." When they call me by that name, I get up and speak to them formally.

I have six names--one pet name, one everyday name, and several formal names for formal occasions. My father was of the Dog Salmon clan of the Tlingit tribe from Angoon. He gave me the name "Tleikw Eesh." My cousins from another clan that branched into my father's house adopted me as one of them, although they were of the Killer Whale clan and I am of the Wolf Clan. I am of the same emblem as my cousins. I remind them of their brother who passed away, so they gave me his name. Everytime they see me, when I arrive in Angoon, the Killer Whale Clan always welcome me.

My first formal name is Kahlax. This was given to me during World War II. They were having a ceremonial affair of which I was a part. My uncle called me out and said "Kahlax! From now on, your name is going to be formal and we are going to use it whenever you are in this area."

The last one I got is Us Xak. The Native people of Auke Bay and Juneau know me by that name now. They have forgotten my original name. I am telling you this because, you see, a name never dies. The name of George Betts still lives. He was a minister of the Gospel, and he was a cousin of mine. I have always tried to live up to the expectations of my family to be as good as George Betts was. The name never dies. That is the culture of the Tlingit people.

I am going to talk a little about Indian dances. I am of the Wolf clan. Once I didn't know how to dance or what to do when taking

part in a ceremonial dance. About 1945, there was an Alaska Native Brotherhood convention going on in Angoon---my father's homeland. Someone gave me the Wolf head Crest to wear to dance in. I went to my father-in-law, Pete Kanosh, who was the authority on all my knowledge in Tlingit culture. I went to him when I needed information. I said to him, "I am going to the dance with a Wolf head piece on. How am I going to enter?" The most important part is how you enter through the door when dancing. So I asked my father-in-law about it. He said, "You are going to act as a Wolf who is tracking its prey." So when I came in, I came in that way.

Leader of the Clan

The head of the house doesn't just move in; he is chosen by the family. He is always anxious to train some younger man to take his place when he dies. The clan was always farsighted in that manner; there was always a young man to take the leader's place.

The Spartan training of a young man goes into our way of life. The nephew's mother nurses him from birth to six or eight years of age. The rule is that she must turn her young son over to her brother (who is an uncle on his mother's side) to train him in the way of life so that he will not disgrace his clan. He will be a brave man and not be afraid to die for a cause; he will live a straightforward life; he will be a provider; he will respect elderly people; he will be trained to speak when the time is appropriate. We have formal meetings where we use formality in full regalia. There are times for words of comfort. The pattern for it is always the same; we use it for the opposite clan only. The opposite clan has the authority to speak comfort to the other clan in times

of sorrow.

Within my own clan I may speak to my brothers in an informal way. But when it comes to a ceremony where everyone appears in full regalia, there are words to use and a proper manner in which to use them. If it is death, there are prepared words to use. If there is trouble in ordinary life, like trouble between two clans, no one can be the peacemaker or go-between except the brothers-in-law. If they bear arms against one another, the brother-in-law stands in between as long as he can stand and has strength enough to endure it. He stands between the two clans to prevent them from killing one another. They can't touch him, because they have respect for his authority for he is a brother-in-law. If the opposite enemy is a Raven, he has the authority to go to the Raven side to take messages back to the Eagle side. (He must have a good memory to do this.) They will say, "Now you repeat it back to me." He will repeat it to show how he will deliver it to the enemy. When he goes over, they can't touch him because he is a brother-in-law and he is one of them. So he stands in between and holds them apart as long as his strength will stand it. He is the only one who has authority to do this.

But if one kills the other, he steps back. It is a known law among the Tlingit people. They know it. The minute one shot is fired, and they see that a man is dead, the brother-in-law moves out. Then war is declared.

The war will last until the most important leaders are killed, like any war between nations. It will last until one side gains strength over the other.

When the battle is over, they agree that there will be peace.

but there are hard feelings between them. So this is going to take the highest caste individual from both sides--one that is thought a great deal of--to be the security and insurance that there will be no more deaths. An exchange is made. (Our loved one is over on the other side and their loved one is over on our side.) So this keeps them apart until the negotiations begin--the Peace Dance. It will cost both sides things of value for the conflict. Bringing peace back always costs both sides something.

The hostages taken from the other side have to be treated with care--be fed and clothed, treated with respect and good manners, and have servants waiting on them. They cannot do manual service. They must refrain from all family activity, and their lives are not their own. Guards are over them all the time so that no harm befalls them. These hostages are called "Goow-Ah-Kahn," Deer. The deer signifies Peace, because of its' character. A deer is independent, and harms no one. So the hostages from each side must be timid. I would call them collateral or insurance that there will be no trouble.

So the Peace Dance starts. A very important part of the conflict begins.

Negotiations For Peace

The chosen words must be appropriate, given in the right manner with the right approach. The orator must speak to the opposite clan according to a prepared ritual. According to Tlingit law the first actions and expressions of peace must be made with wisdom. The Peace talk is in parables and it is up to each clan to decide what is said, and what

is really meant. This keeps everyone of both clans guessing. The response must be according to what the clan has decided. That is how formal it is. The speaker speaks to the assembly of the opposite side; he is the authorized person who is chosen by the clan. He is told, "You are the one we choose to speak because we agree with your philosophy and thinking, and your way of approach. We choose you." At the final ceremony the deer hostages of both sides are given an opportunity to dance and be heard. Then everything is over and they exchange hostages.

So you see, we had conflicts in our day, too. We had wars. (For further explanation see Tlingit Law)

Burial of Mother

My mother passed away some time ago. While I was yet a boy about twelve years old my father died, so I became an orphan. Mother tried to persuade me to continue to get an education. I realized it was going to be quite a drain on her financially, so, without saying anything to her, I rolled up my little bundle, put it on the end of a stick, and wandered off into the world never to return. Now and then I came back home for visits and my mother would take advantage of the time I was there and she would say, "You will never be able to complete my grave when I die." Tlingits think a great deal about that. It means a lot to them to know that their final resting place is going to be marked. It is important to them. I use to laugh it off and try to talk about something else and she would say, "Ah hah! Just as I thought. You are ignoring me, son." I remember these things my mother would say. "You will be good for nothing. Poor me. When I die I will be lost all together. I will be alone. My grave will be lost forever." I never said anything to this.

Just recently, I was working for the Department of Education when word came that mother was critically ill. I went to Mount Edgecumbe hospital to see how she was doing; she was in a coma. The doctor came in and said, "I don't think she is going to leave us very soon. Why don't you go back to Juneau and tend to your affairs. If it becomes serious, we will call you." I thanked him and said I knew my mother had a stroke. She was 92; she was blessed, she had lived a good life!

Sometimes I think that old age is not a blessing. I have always been of the opinion that we should die young. When old, we are rejected and nobody cares for us any more. The world is through with us. But, anyway, mother was not like that. When I came to her bedside, I said, "This is Cy, can you hear me?" She never said anything; she was in a slight coma. "I came to be at your bedside, mother." I could tell that she could hear me because tears started coming to her eyes. She knew she couldn't answer back so she broke down and cried; but the hurt was there inside.

Anyway, I went back to Juneau and was working for a man who was dedicated; he was a human being and he understood. He was my boss--Bob Thomas, with the Department of Education. I have always admired that man for his thoughtfulness and kind deeds to me when I worked with him. He went out of his way many times to accommodate me. The phone rang in the office and I answered it. It was Mt. Edgecumb. The doctor said, "Your mother just passed away half an hour ago." I said, "All right then, I will clear up what I have got here; I will finish and take the morning flight tommorrow." Word travels fast on a Department floor and word got to my boss Bob Thomas, and he came rushing in and said,"What are you doing here?" I said, "I want to clear up everything here." The heck with

everything. Don't come back until you have finished everything. Take all the time you need." I thanked him and walked out.

When the formal arrangements were made I chose all the rituals according to Tlingit law. The Sisterhood Lodge she belonged to took charge. They had a beautiful memorial service. So we put her away according to our Tlingit and Alaska Native Brotherhood-Alaska Native Sisterhood rituals. The sisters walked behind her casket in full regalia with their Sisterhood banners on. She was placed in her final resting place.

So a year went by. I made arrangements in the meantime for a tombstone and the grave site to be fixed up. I phoned my wife, Sophie and said, "I'm going to tend to this like any other Jack or John. There will be no Indian shenanigans on our Indian side. We will just be quiet about it." She never said anything to me.

We arrived in Sitka after the grave was made up and the tombstone was erected. While we were having breakfast that morning in a restaurant, my wife said, "Cy, what you are saying is right. It is good. I have been thinking about it. But I think you ought to abandon that idea. Just perform as you feel. She's your mother; you are now alone." I looked at her. Many times my wife has given me wise council. "Okay," I said, "All right."

The first order of business for me to get things moving was to choose a brother-in law. So I called the one who is an uncle to my wife, and who is a brother of mine by marriage and by law. I called him and he excused himself saying he had to go hunting that day; he had been planning it a long time. So I called another brother-in-law by the name of Thomas. He agreed and said, "Fine, come right over." So I went to his

home and said, "Now this is what I want you to do. You contact all the opposite clan and tell them they are invited to a party tonight. Out of this group of guests, I want you to inform six or nine and bring them along this afternoon at 3:00p.m. and meet me at the cemetery. They are to look over the tombstone, and how the marker is set up on the grave. They must know where my mother lies." I had a plan all ready. So, 3:00 p.m. came around and my grandparents on my mother's father's side were there waiting at the cemetery and they were looking it over. My wife came along. A man by the name of Frank Kitka, who was one of the leaders of the Raven Clan and was the leader of the Coho Emblem Clan, was the spokesman on that side.

A taxi brought my wife and me to the cemetery. I walked up to the grave site and those who were asked to come were standing there. I stood by the grave marker while my guests watched. I spoke to my mother, and this is what I said in Tlingit, "Mother, Mother, it is I. This is Joshk (my pet name she used to call me) speaking to you. You thought I was never going to fulfill your wish. At our dinner this evening I am going to finish the ritual that we have started now. I am going to fulfill your wish in every way. You have belittled me too many times as I was growing up. You have belittled me and maybe you wanted to train me through that manner. You have had some peculiar ideas in your time, Mother, and I think this is one of them---a way to make a man out of me. For that reason I am going to fulfill it." I walked away, broke down and wept. I couldn't hold it back. I was just emotional. My brother-in-law spoke to me, "All of us standing here, there is not one of us who has not walked around in this condition. What happened to you?" I told him, "I am stand-

ing here. My mother has been put away like your mother. So today, I know that your mother and my mother have met and their spirits have ascended together." We believed years ago our spirits came out of us and ascended. I was talking with that idea in mind; we have used that form of conversation from the time of my great grand uncles. He knew I was hurting inside, that I was mourning and grieving because I lost my mother. All my childhood experiences with my mother came back to me in that particular moment. I couldn't stand up under it; I was in sorrow; I was trembling and mourning. He took me by the arm and said, "I am positive today that your mother and my mother are holding hands. They are glad to see one another because they were good friends." After I composed myself, I turned around and said, "Goo Nul Cheesh, thank you for your most comforting words. This is the first time you have talked to me in this manner. How appropriate it is that you have reached for the words of your uncle who trained you to say these words to me. I appreciate it." That was my response.

We don't talk just to be talking. Everything is formal. The words which I used were chosen and have been carried down for generations. Frank Kitka used this ritual, too! I had to know what to say and how to respond. It was not just any ritual he used, because he knows my background and I know his.

That evening, my sister and my relatives, distant relatives, and cousins prepared a party. I had told them earlier, "Be ready. We are going to put up money. This is going to be the last Tlingit ritual that I am going to perform. After this I am going to become a white man. There will be no more of me. I am going to live like a white man.

But right now I am going to finish the ritual."

Remember, I said at the cemetery, "I am going to fulfill your wishes." Well, the opposite clan looked at me as a man who has been living too long in white civilization. But, I have never mixed white and Indian culture. I left home in 1928; but since then I have returned many times. But in the meantime, I was learning our Tlingit culture, our way of talking, our approach in special occasions, and which words and gestures are to be used. This is all important, and I was getting this education in the meantime, and I knew what had to be done when the final ritual came around for my mother that night.

I had caught them off guard. My guests were all seated. After they finished partaking of the food, a very formal program started. We reached for the values we had inherited from our uncles. We brought it up in our talk. I used that. There was one woman who wasn't caught off-guard. She brough a jacket to show the beadwork that had been done on it---maybe a hundred years old. She brought it in unnoticed. So I had regalia there that was handed down from generation to generation. Mother told me, "You have to carry this regalia. It is yours now. Whatever you do with it, don't sell it; pass it on to your nephew." I took it and that night put it in the suitcase along with two shirts, one with the Chilkat blanket design, and the other a wolf emblem shirt. One had beadwork. My cousin, who is married to my wife's sister, is the same House as me. (Same clan--his emblem is wolf, too.) He was there for the ceremony. And then the party started. I said to my brother-in-law, Thomas "Come here, my brother-in-law, and put this regalia on me." The guests were astonished; I had caught them offguard. The formal ritual

began. When he put the shirt on me, I stood up in front. The guests always sit in their places of respect in the house and the doorway is usually the host's, because food and things are brought in. So, when they come in, they have to come in through that one door. The very important part of entering the ritual is how you enter, as I said before. So, when my brother-in-law put the shirt on me, I gave a signal to my uncles, (there were two of them there) and I said, "Sing the song of creation of the Wolf Crest." Remember I told you about Gooch Gahs meaning "Wolf Crest?" That was the creation of that clan. They have a formal song and a dance for very solemn occasions that goes with it. So, my uncles got the drum and started singing the song of creation and I started dancing with it.

Everybody was all eyes and they all stood up. The woman who got the jacket called her son to put the jacket on him and made him stand up so we could all see him. He was talking to me, by his action saying, "I, too, have gone through the ceremony that you are going through, because I have this regalia on me." He stood there solemnly while I was dancing. Some of the women folk of my clan began to weep. They were weeping because this song was sung so many generations ago---their uncles, parents, grandparents used to sing it on such an occasion; it lit a spark. They were singing and I was dancing and it touched them. After everything was over, I said, "All right, we are through with this portion." The women with the regalia spoke to me and said, "I, too, have gone through this ritual as you gave gone through. It brings us back to where we remember. Just so you might be strong as you were performing, I put this shirt on my son so you could see it." As I said,

they were talking to us by their presence, and their appearance, and what they did. All my side-the wolf, the eagle, the killer whale, the porpose clans of the Eagle emblem (the Eagle is the top of our family tree; out of that comes branches)--it was their ritual as well as mine, but I am the head of it. So they couldn't do anything without my consent. That is the law. So, my clan brought out all their money to give to the Raven clan, which amounted to about $4,000. That is why a lot of our people are abandoning this idea--because it costs money.

Then I called my aunt, Mrs. Susie Paul, and said, "You are going to be named Guyatly. You are my mother now." The name doesn't die. My mother in body is dead, but the name arises again and is transferred to my aunt. So when I see her, I call her mother.

So every requirement of the ritual was performed, finished. After a few days, I left Sitka.

I am telling you this for an illustration. I was asked about these rituals that we perform on such occasions, so I used this as an illustration. This is not the only way--there are many other ways to handle these times of mourning.

After everything in the ritual is done and the solomn portions are over, we get up and let our hair down. Fun begins and we begin to sing love songs to our children and so on; we get up and tell stories. All our children are attached to us so we get up and say, "You are my son" or"You are my daughter, so I sing a song to you." If you are a son or a daughter you are not going to take it sitting down. You are going to jump and you must dance. Just like I used to make my granddaughter dance and laugh when I sing to her little love songs.

That's the way we perform. It goes into fun. After we are through, the opposite side would say, "There is no more sorrow now. The sorrow that you had, you have put on a dish and you gave it to us and we ate it all, so now you have no more sorrow because we ate it all up. So let's have a good time." And we all dance.

That's it. That ends the formality of rituals pertaining to mourning that affects our lives so much because we know that death is inevitable.

Ceremonial Dances

Once, when we had a bazaar over in Angoon, I had just gotten out of the hospital with a spinal fusion; I was there for a month. Someone gave me a Wolf hat to use at this bazaar. They knew that I was in line for using the Wolf hat in ceremonial dnace--it was proper that I use it. (Anybody of the same clan could use it, in honor, with our consent.) But anyway, they gave it to me, and I was appreciative and willing to perform. I was grand secretary of the Alaska Native Brotherhood so I thought I should participate in this ceremonial dance. So I went and put the Wolf hat on. I didn't know how I was going to come in, so I asked my father-in-law, Pete Kanosh, "How should I come in?" and he instructed me. I came in according to my clan.

The most important part of a dance is the man of authority who carries the Dorsal Fin of the Killer Whale. He comes in first, and then the dancers come in behind. The one who comes in first, behind the Dorsal Fin of the Killer Whale, is chosen from the group of dancers according to his class standing. For instance, we are the hosts, Eagles, and

when they, the Ravens, come in to dance for us in return, thanking us for the invitation extended to them, they choose who will come in after the Dorsal Fin of authority. At the ritual I told about, my wife's mother was chosen because she was our tribal daughter. Here again it brings out the marriage between my wife and me. My wife's mother was a daughter to my mother's brother--a daughter of my uncle. When they were going to come in a dance, they chose her to be the first one to enter, because she is our tribal daughter; and like I say, we take our children on our lap and make them dance. That is the way we perform--we just don't come in any unorderly way. We come in according to our tradition and we come in according to what emblem is on our back representing our family. The design of our background, or our culture, and our family tree, is on our regalia, and we come in accordingly. The first entrance is important because the guests are watching to see which way you are going to come in, and they know the proper ritual. The way the hosts enter sets the tenor of the entire ceremony or occasion.

I talked earlier about the dance. When I first started to study music, the first statement I heard in my class was burned in my mind, and I remember it, it was: "The art of music is expressing one's thought in tone." I learned music as a child in school. We had a small music class and this is where I studied music--where we first learned to sing songs. Music has played an important part in the culture of the Native people of Alaska. When Tlingits sing, they use only about seven steps on the music scale--no more. They never use octaves. They compose songs by this rule. So, when they sing, they sing according to this scale. I know that writing music is something else--it is another field. When

you translate music, there are Tlingit songs in two-four time and six-eight time, and so forth. But that goes into another field. Someday I would like to see some of this music translated and written, according to musical groups--32 bars to a song and also, an introduction.

We went up to Nenana one year and I watched their Indians and their type of dancing very closely. I enjoyed it, because they had a different approach to their songs. The leader sings without striking the drum as he builds up the momentum to the place where he hits it. I call that vamp music. In popular music, years ago, they had vamps, and they worked up to a momentum. They called it the vamp, where the full orchestra comes in. We had a piano player who used to play with us and he always played the vamp. He sets the tempo for us and after he finishes that, we come in with our saxophone, cornet, clarinet, trombone, drum, or whatever instruments we have. It is then a melody with harmony. I noticed in Nenana that they have this system. I enjoyed it because the leader sings and sets the tempo, the songs and words, then he strikes the drum, and they start dancing. This is their system. The dance tempo in Nenana on through the Chitina area down to Yakutat, is fast. Some Indians of the North dance with their hands in motion. The dance leader in Nenana had one set rule--his way of dancing. I admired him for that, and I saw the rest of the dancers dance with their hands. And, too, I noticed that their tempo was faster than ours. Our music is more serious and heavy; that's the difference between our music and theirs.

There are several stories about how Tlingits declared war on the Kushta. This one happened in Yakutat. After a bitter war was ended

between the Land Otter Colony and the Yakutat people, they had a peace dance. In preparing for a ceremonial dance they start with a soft drum beat and song, which means "They are setting their regalia aside, looking them over, and choosing which one they are going to use for this occasion." There are several kinds of regalia to pick from for different occasions. They have a song for this while they are getting dressed and preparing for it. They start with "Sh Dot Kuda Shee," which means we are planning and getting dressed. It is a song for dressing and a song for choosing the regalia they are going to use. Before the performance starts, the dancers are heard ringing behind the door (they leave the door open a little so the guests can hear them); and they warm up the drum. Tlingits have a special ritual to warm up the drum. They expose it to heat, then rub it to tune it up. While doing this, they sing a song, getting ready for the entrance dance, which begins the official performance of the ritual they are going to perform.

There are two types of dances I have mentioned before. There is the serious portion of it (which I told you about regarding my own ceremony that I gave in memory of my mother), which is extremely emotional. The dancers pay tribute to their past history and the people in it. After the formal ritual they let their hair down, and a different type of dance starts. They sing and dance. They sing songs of affection and love to their children, telling how it was when they were young. In the past, the parents would put their children on their laps and sing songs for them to dance to. We still do that. I have grandchildren who have already grown up. My first granddaughter I danced on my lap, too. I would sing to her and make her dance. That is the form dance that

Tlingits use. They sing and dance for their guests. They tell them of their love affections for them.

But the serious ritual is where they dance according to set rules. The women folk--(called "Kuh Zahs"), have their own way of dancing. They swing their regalia around or their hair. They don't move their neck. They just move their waist up to their head, so that their earrings and hair swing out and back. They dance this way while they are singing. If I am the master of ceremonies, I have the authority to control the program. It is an important part of the program when the girls dance like that. They call it Dance of Grief, which is the official name for the Tlingit. That is important in a ritual.

Warming up the drum provides a hypnotic introduction to the dance ceremony. Then, after everything is ready, and the performers have chosen their regalia they are going to use, and are all decorated up according to their markings on their faces, the drummer comes out and speaks. He is the official announcer.

Like I said, the Land Otter Colony declared war on all Tlingit people, and in return the Tlingit people declared war on the Land Otter people. They came together in conflict. This is a story that was told to me by Harry Bremner of Yakutat. He used to sit for hours and tell about it. He told me during my last visit there that the Land Otter people declared war on the Tlingits and so, in return, did the Tlingit people. A truce was held. When the peace dance began, the drummer was a young Land Otter. They opened the door of the community house and he came in. What he was using was a king crab shell for a drum, and the

Land Otters sang this way, "Xixi Tunooxoo Gohw Aya." This is what they said, "This is a crab shell drum; this is a crab shell drum; this is a crab shell drum!" The Land Otter people came in dancing in the Peace Dance, and all the Tlingit people who were guests all toppled over and fainted. The Land Otters had control over the minds of the people like that. The Tlingits all fainted. But the Land Otter people still continued to dance into the room. The people sat up one after another and they continued to watch the dance. "This is a crab shell drum; this is a crab shell drum." The Land Otters continued singing. And then they changed over and san, "This is a drum that became too loud; this is a drum that became too loud." The Land Otter Colony that was entertaining in the peace dance were singing this. They were the hosts; they hosted the Tlingit people in the peace ceremony. So when they all came in they started singing again and said, "Don't crowd to close, people. Make room for the next dancer who is named Tootsi Eeti Gootl. (There is a little humor in this story.) So they made room for the next dancer coming in. The dancer came dancing in; it was a little mink with a herring scale for regalia on his forehead. That was a great dance.

This kind of story Tlingits used to tell. Whether it happened or not, I don't know. Personally, if you ask me, I don't think I can answer the question. It was told to entertain as stories that could be told during fireside chats, in the evenings. The tradition of our people was to tell stories by campfire, in the evening after the sun set, and this is one of the stories they told. They made peace with the Land Otter Colony. Now this was told to me by Harry, of Yakutat. That is

one of the stories told as entertainment by the Tides People, probably to keep the minds of the young folk occupied.

Personal Names

Now we are going into the stories and myths. I have already told you about the seal hunter who drifted out into the ocean--a man by the name of Kah Xuch Gook. In Sitka there are people by that name yet. It is a Kiksadi name. A name is given to you according to your clan emblem. Kiksadi is a Kiksadi clan name. No one else could be named that but Kiksadi. As I say, I have six names, and no one else could use them unless he is a Kokwanton like I am. No other could use it.

I have the pet name my cousins gave me. My father-in-law was a Tleik Eesh Killer Whale. In Angoon, my cousins gave me their brother's name who I reminded them of--the brother who died years ago. These men were my tribal brothers. Their father was of the same house that my father came from. They accepted me as their tribal cousins and brother. So, since I reminded them of their departed brother, they have given me this name, "the father of all berries." It is, sort of, a pet name; that is what my cousins called their brother, because they loved him. When he died they were brokenhearted, and they couldn't give his name to anybody else. Because I was born of the same house that their father belonged to, they gave it to me. It made me a tribal cousin. When they gave me the name, it made me a tribal brother. Every time I arrive in Angoon my cousins recognize me by this name. They put their arms around me and tell me that they are glad to see me, and they call me by the given name.

Only the tribal brothers in relationship could joke with one another. With our brothers-in-law it is different. There is a manner and way that we talk to them. We cannot talk to him as I talk to my tribal brothers. I could be stern with them but I cannot be with my brother-in-law.

So a name is important in Tlingit culture. We can trace clan heritage from names--like, who they are, what class level what house they came from, what tribe and what clan they belong to. Unlike the names George, Jack, or John, which are just names, our name identifies our background. They identify where we come from, who we are, and our social standing in the community.

Demon Possessed

Then there is another one about Tlukana. This is the sixth belief. I have mentioned five and this is the sixth one. You read it in the Bible. They believe that a man goes wild and demons enter his being, because he has cut the tongue of a raven and has removed it. He then becomes demon possessed. My mother said when she was a very young woman, one of the town's people became demon possessed, and he used to disappear. He used to go out in the evening and sing the songs of the drum, and this lured the Kushtaka back to the village. He moved like the wind. She said she had seen it. When I started studying the Bible, I was amazed to see that the demon possessed people who knew Jesus was entering Bethlehem, these demons possessed men who came to meet him and they cried out to him, "Stay away from us, you Man of God. Stay a-way from us." And Jesus said, "Get thee out of these men." These men were demon possessed and they dwelled in the caves around Bethlehem and

among the dead in the graveyard. After Jesus spoke, they tore and they cut their bodies for they weren't themselves. They were demon possessed. We have stories like that and we call them Tlooka Nah because they cut the tongue out of a raven. After they brought him down and took him to medicine man, to bring him back to normal, he came out of the spell. After this experience, he would sit and tell where he came to himself. He said there is one place on Baranof Island on the highest peak (He said he didn't know how he got up there); it was so steep that when he looked on all sides of him it was straight down. But he got up there. How he did it he didn't know. And then he lost all of his senses again. When he came to, he was at the side of a half-moon lake on an island. He just moved like the wind. Any Tlingit-speaking people to whom I mention this know what I am talking about--and confirms the story outline. Tlooka Nah becomes wild and demon possessed. That is the only answer we have.

My mother said it was something awful. The women folk were warned to keep their children home. She said that on one occasion Tlooka Nah grabbed a dog and just ripped the hide right off it and started to pick on the flesh like a raven. What is it? I don't know. The only answer I can think of is what I read in the Bible. This man must have been demon possessed, because his life and his body was not his own. He became something else. He became wild and he moved with the wind. The Tlingit call it Ut Woo Ha. It is the result of cutting the tongue of a raven.

War Canoes

War canoes were purchased from the Haida on Graham Island

War canoes were purchased from the Haidas on Graham Island south of the panhandle of Alaska. They were made out of red cedar logs, hewn out, and some 35-40 feet in length. Huge vessels they were. Of course, "War Canoes" was just a name.

south of the panhandle of Alaska. They were made out of red cedar logs, hewn out, and some 35-40 feet in length. Huge vessels they were. Of course, "War Canoes" was just a name. Tlingits used them mainly for trading they did with other nations up and down the coasts of Alaska. Seafood delicacies were transported to communities such as Haines, Wrangell, Ketchikan, and they were the Indians who traded with the Athapascans of the Interior. Sitka was known for its herring spawn and their protection of it. Ketchikan was known for its potato. Yakutat was known for its herring eggs, too. They prepared the eggs by drying. They prepared them for shipment to other communities. Wrangell was known for its Ooligan. The oil was extracted and was used for different types of cooking. Lifewise, the Chilkat Ooligan was part of the smelt family. The Chilkats dried it, smoked it, extracted the oil from it, and traded it for valuable seafood which comes from Sitka, like abalone, cockles, clams, and other edible seafood.

Forms of Community Government: Civil and Tribal

The land, the sea, and the sun are governed by the laws of nature. The tide, sun, moon, and winds share a major part in governing the activities of the Indians in their day-to-day relationship with one another. If they violate or ignore these set laws, it could be the last move of their life. It could mean death. Likewise, the Tlingit nation has set laws that govern tribal communities in decision making. Laws violated by murder, accidental death, assault and battery, manslaughter, marriage separation, or other violations of laws involving person or persons, communities, tribes or clans are punishable by Tribal law. If a person is found guilty, he is punished severely.

Tlingit form of government includes the elders of the community. The leaders of each tribal house, from the assembly. Let's take a murder case which could be a murder in self-defense or premeditated murder. First, the accused is brought before the assembly escorted by his uncle. As mentioned before, the uncle plays a major role in the life of a young man. The uncle is obligated to raise and train his nephew. When his nephew is in trouble, he must stand by him. The assembly hears the case. They first look at the background of the accused--his caste, his social standing, his integrity; these are all taken into consideration. Likewise, in the presentation of the plaintiff, the name of the deceased is brought before the assembly and they examine his background, his caste standing, his social standing and his integrity. After all this has been weighed by the assembly, a decision must be made. If it is premeditated murder, they must deal with it by the law. After both sides have been heard on the case, the assembly takes the standing of the young man accused, and if he is found to be equal in his caste and social standing with the deceased, the penalty is set. It could be a life-for-a-life penalty, or it could cost the clan money or valuable things in exchange for the life of the deceased. At times the penalty is very high and if the family cannot meet the demand, it must be life for a life. It is up to the family of the accused to pay. If a life for a life is the decision of the elders, his family must come to a settlement, one way or another, as to who is to pay the debt.

History has shown that in many cases the individual who is penalized has been admired and loved by the community. So they contribute to his fine by making up the needed, or additional, payments and his life is spared.

When both sides are satisfied that the penalty has been met, then a peace treaty must be signed by the two communities or clans. While peace is being negotiated, both sides take a hostage into captivity; this is called "Guwakon", meaning "deer." The reason it is called "the deer" is because, as we all know, a deer that roams the forests of Alaska is as the sheep in other lands. They are harmless and cannot hurt anyone. They are helpless to those who prey on them.

An individual of very high standing in his community, caste, or social standing, becomes the hostage of one side and the peace ceremony begins. Then both sides put up money and it costs both sides or clans to bring peace once more to the clans of their community.

Let's go back again to premeditated murder. Should the young man who has been killed by someone be more prominent in the community because of his high caste standing than the accused, and the opposite clan demands a life for a life, but refuse to take his life because of his low caste standing, then the uncle has to pay the penalty by giving his life. Should this be the decision of the family, then the uncle has no choice but to comply. He cannot refuse. So the ritual of death begins. He will send word, via the brother-in-law, saying to the opposite side (clan), that he has accepted and will meet the extreme penalty. And that he is now preparing for it, and will set a date as to when he will appear and present himself for death. The time for his execution arrives. The clan gathers in the tribal house. His brother-in-law assists him in putting on his regalia of his caste standing within his family and his tribal house. He prepares himself for death. In the meantime the enemy (the opposite clan) assembles at the door of his tribal house. When he is ready, the family sings the last song. Should the man be a

grandson of the bear emblem, or the eagle, the wolf, raven, beaver, or dog salmon, he will utter the last sound of his clan. This is called Utshoow Li Ux. Ashes are then cast out through the doorway and he follows by imitating his grandfather's emblem, and then he walks out through the door into the hands of the enemy who are waiting with spears and daggers. He gives his life in payment of the crime which his nephew had committed. This is the reason the uncles trained their nephews well, so they might avoid such a catastrophe. When both clans are satisfied that payment was paid in full, the deer Guwakan hostage performance begins, and a peace dance is held. It will cost both sides money.

Should death result from self-defense, the ritual follows a different procedure. The elders hand down a decision that a fine must be set. This often does not require a life for a life. The family of the deceased often gets payment of fines with blankets, money, and copper. The copper is called Tinnah. Tinnah was used as a medium of exchange between communities, clans, and tribes within Alaska. This originated in the Copper River area. Tinnah has been traded among Indians of other localities. The value of copper was very high, and if an individual or family obtained a lot of copper, they were recognized as a wealthy family in their community. Blankets were also valuable and used as a medium of exchange. So in the case of accidental death or self-defense, it was settled by payment of a fine. This also was the case of assault and battery. Manslaughter was considered accidental death, too.

The marriage separation is a simple case in which judgement falls to the families involved in the marriage. They can settle it one way or another with the help of the elders of the community, and payment by a relative of the person at fault.

Laws Recognizing Ownership Of Land And Sea

In laws recognizing ownership of lands and sea, generally from where natural resources are obtained for the livelihood of the Tlingit nation, possession of this land is recognized by all tribes and all clans. When salmon or fish are taken from that area, duty is paid to the land owner. Likewise, when game is taken, duty is paid to the land owner. The only exception in land ownership is the Taku River area. The land owners recognize the needs of others, and because the Taku River was the source of migration of all other clans, they recognized this. With this understanding the land owners did not press nor did they try to collect duty for the privilege of taking of fish and game from that area. They felt that all were entitled to the natural resources of the Taku River. This is a statement issued by one of the land owners of the Tlingit nation, named Yunyeidee.

The Law of Marriage

Marriage could only be between the Raven and the Eagle clans. It was unlawful for a Raven to marry another Raven or for an Eagle to marry another Eagle. If this ever happened, there was a very high penalty to pay, set by the family themselves. The price to be paid would either be death or departure from the clan to the wilderness. In some cases the penalty was death by drowning.

The Yakutat people tell the story of such a case where this marriage law was broken. The penalty was separation from the community- and husband from wife. As they made them both stand back to back, the ritual began, and a song was sung. As this proceded, they were required to walk away from one

another, each in the opposite direction. The mother of the young man refused to accept this penalty. She decided to make the journey with her son into the unknown wilderness. Although her son protested her action, she told him she decided to die with him and go wherever he went. It was during their journey into the wilderness, it is said, that they were the ones who discovered the copper fields in the Copper River area. This made them very wealthy. The copper became the medium of exchange of the Indian nation throughout the Alaskan villages, communities, and territories.

Marriage is a very important move in the life of a Tlingit couple because they know that they must live together for the rest of their lives. Only at death do they part.

The Law of Adultery

Adultery was one of the worst crimes to be committed, and it was dealt with accordingly. And, it has cost the Tlingit nations more wars and separation of clans than any other. This is a major cause of the separation between clans which migrated down the Taku River, and the Stikine River (which are the major rivers in the Panhandle of Alaska). Because of this crime, families separated and migrated to different parts of Alaska. It was a crime that was punishable by death, if not by the elders handing down the decision, then often the husband took the law into his own hands and dealt with the problem himself. In this case the assembly is more considerate to the person who commits this crime. And yet adultery is considered one of the worst crimes in any Tlingit community, any clan, or nation.

Laws Covering Liability

In property damage or theft of property, the assembly was quick in handing down a decision in such cases. The penalty is immediate restitution equaling the property damage and the return of stolen goods. An apology is

usually in order from the embarrassed individual who is caught in such an embarrassing situation such as stealing or destroying property.

Copyright Laws

Songs composed by an individual belong to the clan of which he is a member, whether it be Raven or Eagle. So, likewise, many songs have come down from the Interior that the Tlingit traders brought back with them. Exchange of goods usually purchased the copyright from its owner. It is understood by all clans of the Tlingit nation that songs cannot be used without permission of its owner, and any which belong to a different clan must be bought and paid for in the proper way. If it becomes their property, their song, or dance routine without purchasing its rights, it can cause them a lot of trouble. Such was the case between two major tribes' music, which is called Utshoowoolah, for "this is the last sound an individual makes before he goes out to meet death." This is valuable in the field of music.

Indian Law of Inheritance

An uncle might have more than one nephew or he might have none. If he has more than one nephew, the uncle designates which nephew will be the heir to his property. He chooses him because of the nephew's ability to be dependable, honest, and self-respecting, as well as obedient and loyal to the uncle who trained him for such a time for his uncle's death. Should the uncle have no nephew, then the brother of the deceased is the rightful heir to the property.'

When the wife of the uncle dies, all her belongings such as clothing and utensils are passed on to her sister or daughters. Property that cannot be

used by a male are inherited by the female relatives of the deceased. What can be used by her brothers or uncle goes to the men, such as currency and other belongings usable by her brothers or son.

When the uncle of the clan is a leader and lives in a tribal house, the clan in assembly decides who of the clan members is to take over leadership of the clan, the tribal house and clan regalia. In such a case, money put forward by the heir must be a considerable amount for burial and formal ceremonial activities which go along with the final rites in full regalia.

In some accident cases where both husband and wife lose their life, and there are a considerable amount of securities in the estate, upon the approval of both clans Eagle and Raven in council, the estate, security inclusive, is divided evenly between both families of the husband and wife of the deceased.

In most cases, accidental death of husband and wife is caused by drowning when traveling in a boat from their community to a neighboring village.

Trade Relations

The business of trading furs for tools and utensils was carried on with other nations. Spanish, Russians, and English, as well as others brought wealth in exchange for valuable articles of art, pelts of the sea otter, land otter, black, silver, red fox, marten, and black bear as well as others.

Greed motivated action of the foreigners, which was only human. The Tlingit people were naturally business-minded and knew how to deal with foreigners and met them head on. During these times religion found its way to Alaska in the aftermath of the rush of trading ships to confirm what the Tlingits

already knew and believed--the "Great Spirit Dwells Above."[1] "Ha Shugane Ya" or "Ha Kina Yake." When muskets and black powder were brought by the trading ships, fur was stacked as high as the gun held up by the barrel before it was given in trade for the stacked fur. That was considered the price for the gun.[2]

The Tlingits communicated and came into contact with other neighboring tribes by trading with them. Items of value--clothing and seafood--were taken to the interior from Klukwan, Wrangell, and other communities close to the interior of Alaska. Sitka was known for its seafood--herring roe, black seaweed, and abalones, Killisnoo for potatoes, tobacco, black seaweed and smoked and dried herring.

Hoonah is still known for its lagoon and strawberries that are native to the territory, Icy Straits. Hoonah people were the first to purchase the valuable copper plates shaped like a shield and was named "Tinah" from the Interior Indians "Gunah Nah" with whom they traded merchandise. This became a valuable medium of exchange used in payment of debt and purchases.

Klukwan and Haines are known for their beautiful moose hides used in making ceremonial regalia. The area is also known for its early run of ooligan from which oil is extracted, ribbon seaweed, and early run of salmon and halibut preserved by being smoked with alderwood and then dried. High bush cranberries are prepared in ooligan oil for trade with villages along the coastal area.

It was during a trading trip to the interior and on their return that disaster struck a group of men from Klukwan when one of the relations,

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[1] As told by the author by Peter Kanosh, Angoon

[2] Jim Boyd, Sitka

whose name was "L Keina", died of exhaustion. Time being spent already, and all being burdened with fur and food for the duration of the journey, the closest relative of "L Keina" gave the order to remove the head of the deceased. He placed it on top of the pack of a brother-in-law, put the remains on top of a pile of dry wood, applied fire to the pile, and left it burning.[3]

First Ritual After A Death

A formal ritual must be performed when death comes to a family. In planning the funeral the brother-in-law, "nah conny," plays an important part. The brother-in-law is any member of the opposite clan. About six members of the opposite clan of the deceased are chosen to prepare the remains for burial or cremation. Cremation was how the remains were put away before Russian and American governments came to our land. In the past, ashes of the cremated persons were placed in a container and put in the clan totem pole. When the deceased is a woman, the sisters-in-law prepare the remains, and the brothers-in-law perform the cremation. Decision-making in planning the rituals remains within the family of the deceased, or the leader of the clan on the mother's side, her brother, or an uncle.

When the clan leader dies, the entire community mourns his death. The Tlingits put it as follows: "You gow dowa tunk," which means, "They are sounding the drum." Songs of sorrow are sung. Children are kept indoors and are not allowed to play out. A member of the opposite clan, according to his

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[3] Fritz Willard-Klukwan

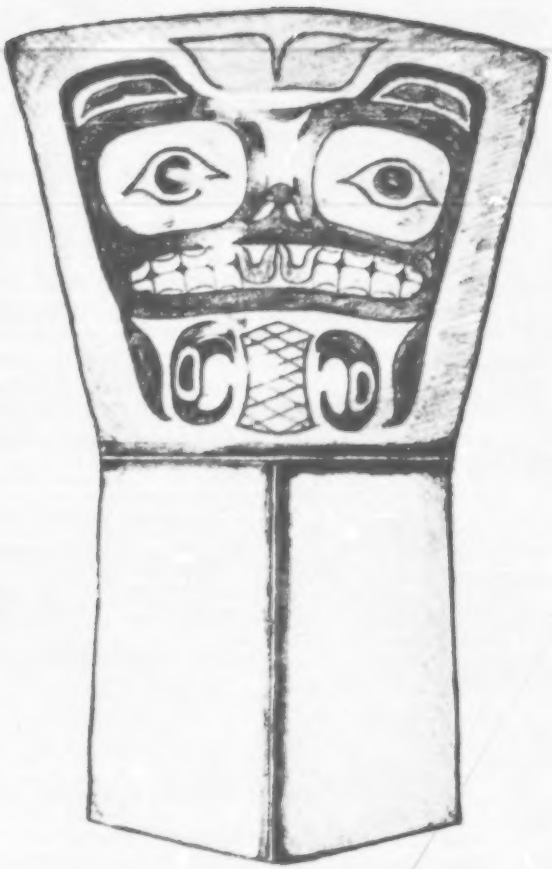
relationship to the deceased, speaks comforting words to the family in sorrow. This is considered a very high tribute to them and the deceased. Anyone of the opposite clan may comfort the family, and they may even invite the family in sorrow to their home for meals before the funeral ceremony.

At the conclusion of the cremation ceremony, the host leader announces the date for the payment of expenses of the cremation, and all prepare for the time and date of the "payoff", which is invitational, and the brother-in-law of the clan extends the invitation from house to house announcing the honor of their presence.

The Payoff

While the guests are arriving, and all are being seated according to their standing in the community, the leader asks the brother-in-law, loud enough for all to hear, if a certain clan leader, which he calls by name, is present. The brother-in-law answers, "He is." When all guests are seated the ritual for the occasion begins, with the master of ceremonies, the brother-in-law, announcing the opening speaker by name. The host clan speaks first. All leaders of the deceased person's clan are hosts and are seated according to clan, next to the entrance of the Tribal House. The opposite clan's leaders are seated as guests of honor which would be the opposite of the entrance and are seated with other members of the guest leaders' family, such as nephews, nieces, children, and visitors to the community. The speaker says in Tlingit, "Goo nul cheesh hot yee ody." This is the usual opening statement translated meaning, "Thank you for coming. Your presence here is valued by the family." Each host leader of the clan is called upon to express gratitude, followed by the serving of lunch or regular dinner.

After dinner the host announces that the guests will be detained



In the past the medium of exchange was tinnah, a copper shield in the shape of a breastplate.

as expenses are met and workers of the opposite clan who have been asked to prepare the deceased for cremation and burial are paid for thier services. The host leader then calls the brothers-in-law or sisters-in-law to keep account of all proceeds as it is brought forward. Then he would say to his family, "How, gook day" meaning "now go ahead," and starts gathering the pooled monies donated by members of the host clan. In the past the medium of exchange was tinnah (copper plate), fur, blankets, slaves, clothing, gopher blankets, and other valuables. The host hands his or her share of money to the brother-in-law, "nah conny," who receives and holds the donation about his head naming the donor by name, repeated by the accounting member of the "nah conny." Last to donate, according to the rules of Tlingit law, is the uncle of the deceased. The total pooled monies would be announced by the "nah conny." Then the workers are paid first, and the rest of the remaining money is distributed among the guests.

When all money has been distributed, the host leader then says, "Huche awah" meaning "that is all, the rest of the program is yours." The guests acknowledge by having their chosen leader proceed with words of comfort and acknowledgement of the gifts of food and money. The ritual ceremony is concluded.

Ritual of Final Rites

Placing a marker on a grave of a deceased clan member is, usually, a well-planned program of rituals. The ritual is identical to the funeral "payoff" after cremation, with this difference, following the announcement of total monies put forward by members of the clan: the leader of the host clan calls ceremoniously for the drum, and a very solemn ritual begins. Importantly, each member of a clan is required to participate. The host says

the following words twice, "Goosh wa age," naming one of his brother clansman by his formal name to come forward and sing with the members of his clan. According to Tlingit law, the Song of Creation, of their emblem, is sung by the host clan. Each member of the host clan gets his turn to dance or sing, until the final song. Then, the leaders of the host clan bring forward the clan regalia of the deceased person and present it to the uncle. The uncle puts it on with the assistance of the nah conny. The uncle dances. The leader repeats words as ritual requires, "Da ny tee, da ny tee," meaning, act as your grandfathers and your uncles in the past.

Songs telling of the clan's creation of their emblem, crest, or migration are sung again. This part is recognized as the sacred moment to all attending, for both host and guest. The guests sometimes are prepared for that moment by displaying their regalia to the host clan who are still in mourning. This action says to the host, "We, too, at one time have mourned the loss of our leader." These are formal gestures of respect used from time immemorial by tribal leaders of the clans. If during this portion near the end of the program the song to which they are dancing or performing, such as the spirit dance, be unfinished, the guest understands this to mean that this "program" will not be the final one.

The Spirit Dance "Yake ootee" is performed behind a blanket with an emblem head crest used by a performer of the host clan. "Yake" means spirit of the medicine man, so each clan dance changes head crests---A different spirit appearing. And sometimes the guests arise and remain standing all through the spirit performance, holding their hands before their faces as if

to shield out sunlight. It is believed the spirit is sharp as a two-edged clan emblem dagger; for this reason, the hand he held before the face is appropriate during the performance of the spirit dance "Yake ootee."

The next part on the program of the "last rites" is on a little lighter side and relaxing to the guests. This part of the program is to give names to some members of the family and grandchildren of the host clan. Formal names are given to two or three. Names are given from the top emblem of the clan, or family. This is done to pass on honor and identity of the clan.

The program moves into the final ritual by the distribution of money to pay off the workers of the opposite clan who have attended to the burial. After all of the monies have been distributed among the guests, with the workers first, the host leader announces, huche-ah-wey, "That's all!"

The guests are told that the next part of the program is theirs for speeches of appreciation. In some other programs, the guest leader would announce that, "There will be no speeches; we will leave this tribal house to return later in full regalia," meaning that the guests will perform, showing their appreciation through ceremonial songs and dances. Here the hosts become guests of honor.

At Tlingit ceremonies, where food is served, some of it is put into the fire, at the same time naming the deceased relatives or other relatives who have died in the past. This procedure has been abandoned and replaced by the placing of food on newly purchased dishes, or useful containers, and making it a gift to the guests. Our generation of Tlingit people contend that putting food in the fire as it was done in the past is a waste of food. But, is it?

"Keet", The Tlingit Legend of the Creation of the Killer Whale

(Adapted for children by: Sister Rose and Cy Peck, Jr.)

Once there was a man named Natsalane'. He was a mighty hunter. His hand was so strong with the spear. His arrow was swift and straight. His eyes were sharp as an eagle's. Once he tracked a deer, or a sheep, or a bear, he was always sure to get it. "Here comes Natsalane', a voice would shout, and the whole village would come running. Then everyone would be laughing and busily taking care of the big catch.

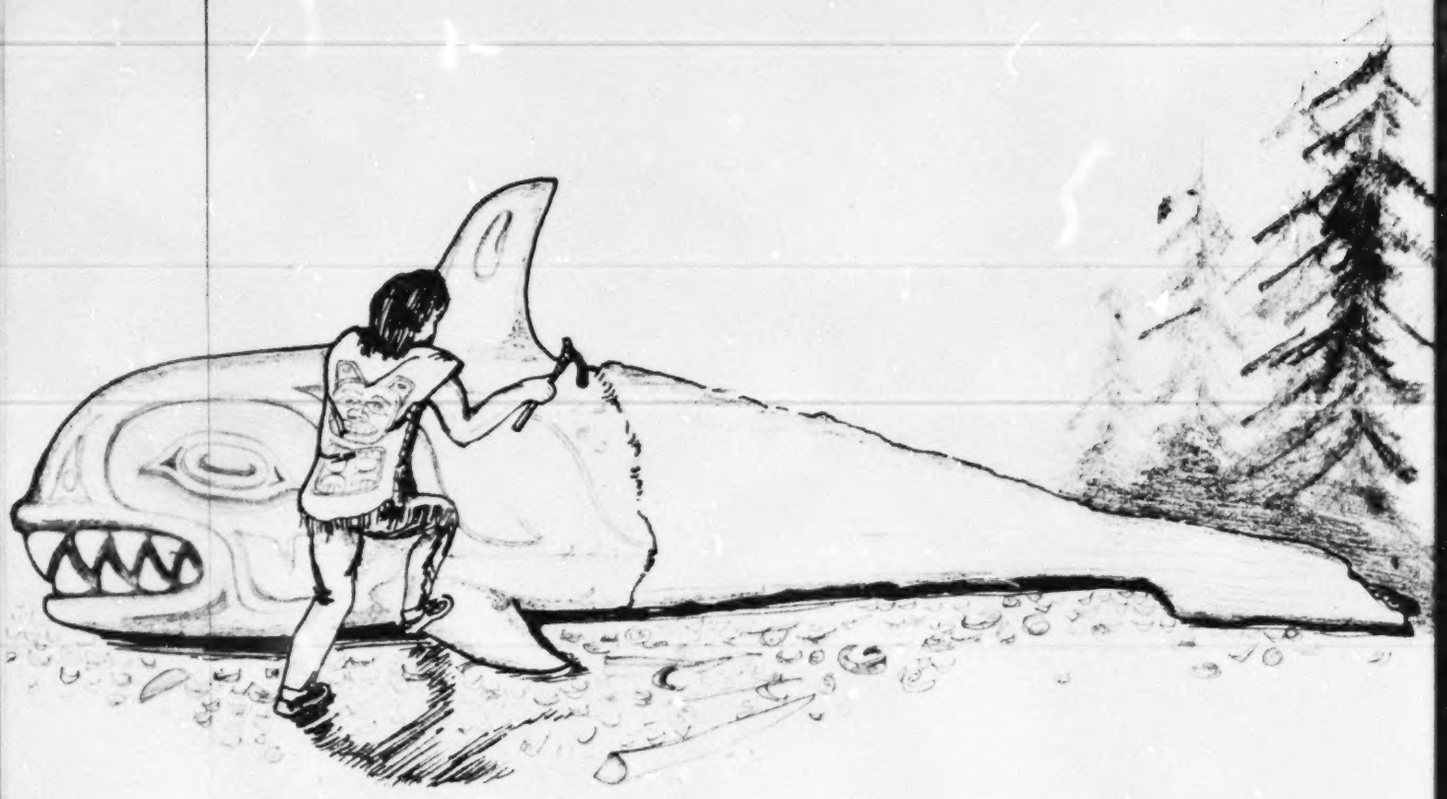
Natsalane' (not-see-la-nay) liked to go hunding with his three brothers-in-law. Together they would prepare for the hunting and fishing trips.

One day when they were preparing for the seal hunt, the green eyed monster came into the minds of the brothers-in-law. It told the brothers "You are the village's most mighty hunters. That is, if Natsalane' were not around. Just think, the whole village would be cheering for YOU!"

The day of the hunt came. The brothers-in-law and Natsalane' went to their hunting spot on a reef.

The water was low when Natsalane' went there to hunt. While he was on the reef, the brothers-in-law rowed away in the canoe. They left Natsalane' on the reef to drown.

But the youngest brother-in-law did not want to see Natsalane' die. He said, "do not do this awful thing!" He tried to take the paddle to turn back the canoe, but he failed.



"Keet." The Tlingit legend of the creation of the Killer Whale...that night Natsalane' took the tools to the shore to work on his plan. He got hemlock and carved the meanest looking monster. He named it "Keet!"

Natsalane' was sad as he watched them paddle away. He covered his face with his hands as the water slowly rose.

Then he heard a voice, "E-Ega Hut Woo Soo." He looked and saw nothing but a small loon swimming around him. Again he covered his face. This time he was peeking through his fingers. Again he heard, "E-Ega Hut Woo Soo." Natsalane' called out, "I saw you!" Since it takes a very clever person to catch a loon, Natsalane' was rewarded by the loon. The loon said to him, "Come with me."

Magically, the loon opened up the reef, and inside of it was another world. There Natsalane' found people who spoke his language .

The people placed him in a bubble and said, "This bubble will take you home. But you must keep your mind on the shore and not on the reef."

Natsalane' rode in the bubble and began moving to the shore. After a while he began to think about what happened on the reef.

He set out a second time but this time he kept his mind on the shore. Soon he found himself on his home shore.

Meanwhile, Natsalane's wife had been told to get his work tools and not to let the brothers know that her husband was alive.

That night Natsalane' took the tools to the shore to work on his plan. He got hemlock and carved the meanest looking monster. He named it "Keet".

He took Keet to the sea and danced and sang and spoke to it. Then he let it loose. The monster swam a little but soon just floated up on the shore. Natsalane' did not give up his plan.

He got a large piece of yellow cedar. Again he carved the monster with huge teeth. He took it to the sea where he again danced and sang and spoke to it. "KEET!"

The mean monster began to stir. Soon it was swimming wildly and showing its teeth.

Natsalane' spoke, "I have created you to kill. There will be three men in a canoe. They have done an awful thing to me. Kill the two but do not harm the young man. He tried to save me. You will do this when I give the order.

Natsalane' waited on the shore. Finally the right canoe came in sight. "GOOK," he ordered.

At that, Keet took off like a swift arrow. It snapped its strong jaws, first at one then the other! Then, on a part of the broken canoe, he floated the young man to the shore.

His plan finished, Natsalane' sat there thinking. He knew he had created a killer. If he let it go, it could kill many poor fishermen. If he kept it, someone else might use Keet just to be mean.

After a while Natsalane' spoke to Keet, "I have created you only to kill the people who have been mean to me. Now I will let you go.

But because I, a man, created you, I command you never to kill a man again. Go and enjoy this beautiful world."

Keet looked at its maker. It no longer looked mean. It turned and moved slowly into the deep dark waters of the sea. Natsalane' watched. He knew that Keet would never kill again.

Even to this day, the Killer Whale has never been known to kill or harm any human being.